

DOWN THE TRACK

N E W S L E T T E R

#85
SEPT
2020



FEDERAL CONFERENCE

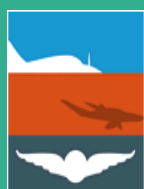
Changing with the times -
connecting through our
screens to improve
education for isolated
students

GRANTS, BURSARIES AWARDS

Rewarding the hard work
and passion of our isolated
students and families

A SPECIAL LUNCHEON

Katherine Branch celebrates
the ease of restrictions with a
face-to-face meeting with guest
speaker Justine Dyer from
NTCA



MANY THANKS TO THE CONNELLAN TRUST AND
SIBA SHIPS FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF
THE ICPA NT VENTURES IN 2020



A WORD FROM THE ICPA NT PRESIDENT...

For my whole life and until 2020, champagne and I weren't friends. Then suddenly, boom, bubbles are part of my world (so said everyone in 2020)!

For the last few months the other 'C' word (Covid19 – not champagne!) has shaken life as we know it, with its own version of bubbles. At this very moment I'm sitting in the Sydney airport, its 4pm and there isn't a person in sight. Where we were once highly mobile, evidently our population is now largely functioning online and it makes me wonder about the future of our airline industry.

This morning I met with our Patron, the Administrator of the Northern Territory, in her delegation through Central Australia. As we do in our regular teleconferences, this time face to face, we discussed the **issues raised by our members**, including the cost of airfares to and from the Territory, particularly in accessing education.

Her Honour, who personally refers to the Qantas Chief Executive, Mr Alan Joyce, encourages ICPA NT in support of **our motion carried at the recent Federal Conference** "That ICPA (Aust) appeals to the Minister for Education, the Minister for Regional Education and the Minister for Families and Social Services for geographically isolated students who receive Assistance for Isolated Children to have access to corporate travel airfare program discounts, in the same way ABSTUDY student flights are booked by the Australian Government."

Based on advice ICPA NT received when we met Qantas and Virgin last year, this motion asks the Federal Government to provide a mechanism that takes 'the spike' out of travel during school holidays. As is our position, **we aren't asking for an advantage, we are asking for equity.**

State Governments manage student fares, but air travel is not a state government responsibility - and there is no such thing as 'student airfares'. ICPA NT appreciates the support from voting delegates who carried this motion at Federal Conference, and extend our full support to Federal Council in their advocacy around this motion.

But you know, there are also issues closer to home that need addressing, perhaps more urgently. We have been advocating the NT Department of Education to **finalise the STARS trail**, and to bring the cost of internet - required for the delivery of online education - to a nil cost for families.

ICPA NT note Katherine School of the Air School Council have also written and met with the Department of Education regarding this issue, and Alice Springs School of the Air School Council express support for a united position. I hope, before the next edition of DTT, the NT Department of Education have resolved this issue **in favour of families no longer being out of pocket** in the supply of internet for the purpose of accessing education.

There is so much room for improvement, necessary to achieve equity in education in the bush. However **our biggest challenge right now is time** - or lack thereof - to commit to ICPA, so we can advocate for improvements. The reality is, our community is A MINORITY and frankly, as long as we enable our children to be educated, **we are NOT a priority.**

As a community, as an organisation, we evidently have two choices: volunteer our time to advocate for equity in education, or take what we get and be satisfied with it.

As you will read in my **President Report to Federal Conference**, I don't believe our rural

and remote community receive anywhere near equity in education, and in my view, organisations like ICPA are absolutely necessary. However, without the support of volunteers to advocate, and without the funds to employ people to do it for us, we cannot expect improvement beyond natural progress.

So friends, have a think about it.

The 2021 State Conference will be held in **Alice Springs on Tuesday 2 March 2021**, where we nominate state councillors. Please start thinking now, about whether you have the time to contribute, or who you will ask to nominate.

ICPA is everyone's concern. It's not about your skills or ability. It's about volunteering to improve education in the bush. And ICPA is a pretty inspiring organisation to be a part of.

Call me or anyone from ICPA NT State Council, anytime. Our contacts are on the website (which is currently being upgraded) <https://nt.icpa.com.au/>

SARAH COOK



A WORD FROM THE EDITOR...



Here we are again - another Down the Track ready for you, our wonderful members, contributors, supporters, advocates and isolated families across the NT.

As always, a massive thank you to everyone who took the time to write, send in and submit to the newsletter - it is truly a pleasure finding just the right place for each and

every piece in the pages within.

A special congratulations to our May/June Colouring Competition winners:
Middle School and Above: **Scarlett Copper**
Yr 5/6: **Isla Scott**
Yr 3/4: **Abby Leslie**
Yr 1/2: **Lane Jones**
Preschool / Transition: **Angus McGlynn**

I would have loved to have given everyone a prize as all of the entrants were beautifully done. Pop on over to page 21 for a new colouring page ready for all your wonderful creativity!
For our next edition - Christmas and 2020 Wrap Up - I'd

love to see anything you might like to share; achievements, good news stories, poems, artwork, thoughts, reflections - anything is great!! Your stories might seem like 'nothing to share' to you, but they WILL connect with someone. Every. Time. Never underestimate a shared experience.

**SUBMISSION DATE FOR NEXT EDITION:
16 NOVEMBER 2020**

So until the next edition, and the end of this unprecedented year of 2020, stay safe, stay connected (in whatever way you can), and hold your loved ones close - physically and figuratively.

ANNIKA BELL

Volunteers for Isolated Students Education Aussie Helpers



AHVISE (Aussie Helpers Volunteers for Isolated Students Education) is a voluntary organisation that assists rural and remote children with their educational needs. Retired tutors/teachers volunteer their time to go bush and help our rural and remote kids in the school room. Many of these kids have their own schoolroom on cattle stations, communities, national parks, properties, farms, fishing villages or even the odd remote island.

Where there's help needed AHVISE will be sure to assist if there is a volunteer available.

If you feel you can help our kids by volunteering, or if you are a parent requiring help please get more information and register by going to:

www.ahvise.org.au

Newsletter Editor: Annika Bell - dt@icpa.com.au

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Our Newsletter is now proudly printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper.

NOTE: In order to reduce our carbon footprint we are trialling a reduced plastic mail out for this edition. If you have had any troubles with this new process please email Annika with your concerns on the address above.



NT WEBSITE – <http://nt.icpa.com.au>

Keep an eye on our website as news items, media releases and events will be posted regularly.

If your branch has something important to share with other NT members please email it to the ntwebmaster@icpa.com.au

The NT webpage homepage has a Facebook feed which allows you to view the NT Facebook page without the added burden of increased data due to the ads.



Twitter -- @NTICPA

'Northern Territory Isolated Children's Parent Association'



FRONT COVER - Administrator of the Northern Territory and ICPA NT Patron, Her Honour the Honourable Vicki O'Halloran with ICPA NT President Sarah Cook.
BACK COVER: ICPA NT Vice President Suzanne Wilson and ICPA NT President Sarah Cook presenting MLA Selena Uibo with a present for her soon to arrive baby.



Isolated Children's Parents' Association

NORTHERN TERRITORY STATE COUNCIL Inc

2020 - 2021 Positions

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<p>PORTFOLIO POSITIONS</p> <table><tr><td><p>Allowances - Sarah Cook Assistant: Kerrie Scott</p><p>Boarding - Amber Driver</p><p>Communications & Technology - Sarah Cook Assistant: Kerrie Scott</p><p>Curriculum - Bec Cadzow</p><p>Distance Ed - Amanda Murphy Assistant: Heidi Millership</p></td><td><p>Early Childhood - Rebecca Mohr-Bell</p><p>Rural/Remote Schools - Sarah Measey</p><p>Special Needs - Suzanne Wilson</p><p>Tertiary - Suzanne Wilson</p><p>Training - Katie Payne</p><p>Miscellaneous & Across the Border - Sarah Measey</p></td></tr></table>			<p>Allowances - Sarah Cook Assistant: Kerrie Scott</p> <p>Boarding - Amber Driver</p> <p>Communications & Technology - Sarah Cook Assistant: Kerrie Scott</p> <p>Curriculum - Bec Cadzow</p> <p>Distance Ed - Amanda Murphy Assistant: Heidi Millership</p>	<p>Early Childhood - Rebecca Mohr-Bell</p> <p>Rural/Remote Schools - Sarah Measey</p> <p>Special Needs - Suzanne Wilson</p> <p>Tertiary - Suzanne Wilson</p> <p>Training - Katie Payne</p> <p>Miscellaneous & Across the Border - Sarah Measey</p>
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"WHEN COUNTRY COMES TO TOWN"

"When country comes to town" is a statement that is not taken lightly by the Katherine ICPA Branch, taking restrictions set in place for the annual Katherine School of the Air Inschool by the horns by holding a special luncheon in which 45 invited guests and Katherine Branch members attended.

With the home tutor conference not being able to be held due to COVID-19, Katherine ICPA jumped at the opening during a normally busy week.

Guest speakers Justin Dyer, Chair of the Katherine NTCA Branch and Sarah Cook, President of ICPA NT entertained guests with passionate and straight from the heart speeches focusing on educating kids in the bush.

Kerrie Scott, Katherine Branch President said she was "overwhelmed" with the support from the local branch attending the luncheon.

"Its been a long year, this is the first time that our kids have seen their friends and the first time I have seen some of my friends since our last contact event, which was swim week in December 2019.

"Katherine Branch thought it would be a good opportunity for us all to catch up, have a chat and listen to some inspirational people amongst our community."

Lucky door prizes were on offer from local sponsors Leisure & Lace and Think Water Darwin.

The Katherine ICPA Branch wish to thank Kerrie Scott and Katie Payne for their work in putting this luncheon on.

AMANDA MURPHY



NTCA Chair Justin Dyer



Mandy Tootle and Mel McDonald



ICPA NT State President Sarah Cook and Katherine Branch President Kerrie Scott



ICPA NT Katherine Branch members attending the Katherine Branch Special Luncheon



Sharni Wilson and Annie Craig



Back Row: Amanda Murphy, Sarah Cook, Moira Lanzarin, and Heidi Millership. Front Row: Sally Sullivan, Kerrie Scott, Suzanne Wilson



Rebecca Mohr-Bell, Helen Harding, Moira Lanzaran and Bianca Brown



Face to face after so long - Katherine Branch members listening to guest speaker Justin Dyer



Sarah Cook, Kerrie Scott and Amanda Murphy with ABC Katherine Rural Reporter Jon Daly



Sally Dyer, Heidi Millership, Cassie Coz, Emilie-Rose Carey and Emma Brown

ICPA NT Katherine Branch Special Luncheon

21 JULY 2020



Kerrie Scott and Justin Dyer



Suzanne Wilson and Katie Payne



ICPA NT President Sarah Cook



Sophia Tapp, Dell Harlan, Toni Tapp-Coutts and Pat Elliott



Claire O'Brien, Tracey Scott, Jo Hersey and Bernadette Burk

Welcome to our Katherine Branch ICPA 'Special Luncheon'.

We would like to thank our Life Members for joining us, our State and Federal Council members, along with new members and our community supporters. I'd also like to thank Ben and Sophia from the Nutrien team that are with us every step of the way.

It is fantastic to be able to finally have a face to face branch meeting after what seems to be a very long time. Eight months in fact, which is what has lead to us having a Special Luncheon, in conjunction with our branch meeting, to celebrate our community coming together – social distancing measures in place of course!

Whilst our core business is equity of access to education for our remote students, we can't forget how critically important interaction with other families in similar situations, and creating our own community, is to our well being. The framework of Being, Belonging & Becoming is never more essential than it is to our isolated children, but what separates us from our conventional counterparts, is that we must create our own.

- Children need a strong sense of identity
- Children need to be connected with and contribute to their world
- Children need a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children need to be confident and involved learners, and effective communicators

There wouldn't be many parents that have travelled in for this week that haven't thought – 'how am I going to do this?'. Many of you will have driven incredibly long distances, taking time away from home and work, family and obligations, juggling babies or boarding school drop offs with School of the Air commitments, putting pressure on staff and family to cover everything going on at home – because your livelihood depends on it - and at considerable expense, just to be here to give your children the opportunity to connect. All I can say is that you're doing an incredible job, and it is worth it. There will be times that it just won't come together, and that is okay too – because no one is going to grow strong, independent, resilient children like we will.

This leads into our first guest speaker today - because ICPA are not alone in our fight for a fair go for families in the bush. The Territory economy is intrinsically entwined with the northern cattle industry, and represented by the peak industry body, The Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association, with which we share the majority of our membership cohort. The northern cattle industry, which directly contributes \$450 million dollars to the Territory economy and over \$1 billion dollars indirectly, cannot operate without the people and families behind it, so it can be a little frustrating at times that when we ask our State and Federal Governments for support at ground level to educate our children, the future of the industry, we find ourselves being told – 'Sorry, we just can't afford it'.

Justin Dyer grew up on Hayfield Station, he knows first hand about growing up in the Territory and what supporting families in the bush means to the cattle industry. He now Chairs the Katherine Branch of the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association, and we welcome Justin, along with his wife Sally and their next generation of territory cattlemen.

KERRIE SCOTT - ICPA NT KATHERINE BRANCH PRESIDENT

To read Justin Dyer's speech turn to page 16 and 17

2020 Federal Conference

ICPA NT President's Perspective

In 2018–19 the Northern Territory Government spent \$1.029 billion on education, an increase of \$9 million from last year, to 33,500 students and 153 government schools across the Territory.

It is staggering that for a small jurisdiction with over a billion bucks in the education budget, some Territory families are still carrying a huge financial responsibility when it comes to delivering education in the bush, and we have seen this come through in our motions, year after year.

ICPA NT continues to advocate on state-based issues around access and the delivery of education - including internet, hardware and software.

While we wait for the Territory Government to finalise an internet trial that has so far taken five years, with possibly another two years ahead of us, an increasing number of families are paying the lion's share of internet plans to ensure they have adequate and consistent internet necessary for access to, and delivery of, education.

While the NT Department of Education answered our calls in term 3/2019, by way of a small subsidy to help towards these costs, we believe the situation at present is contrary to the NT Education Act and we hope to see it resolved as soon as possible.

On matters of special needs, we have found it difficult to get traction around our lack of access to early childhood identification, diagnosis and management of special learning needs, including access to specialists, medicare rebates, telehealth services and education advisors; mostly because of the complexities involved in getting two government agencies, health and education, on the same page and working together at the coal face, for our children.

We continue to advocate for mobile playgroups for geographically isolated children (five years and under), in addition to those services available in remote aboriginal communities. While the top end of the Territory has access to a very good service, albeit a service that is continually worried about access to and continuity of funding; the central region has no such service.

Despite this, neither the Territory Government nor the Commonwealth Government can find any money for a Mobile Play Group Service to reach our members in central Australia, a situation which is both astounding and frustrating, considering the year-on-year expansion of similar programs into other remote communities in the NT.

We've made very little progress on gaining a Living Away From Home Allowance for boarding students, and in my opinion, we may have even taken a step backwards, as the criteria for the Interstate Boarding Allowance (\$2000), introduced in 2018, has mysteriously changed once again, and many families who received the allowance last year, have been denied this year.

Nevertheless, people who live in the bush are notoriously good at getting the job done, regardless of the barriers; and families living in the bush take exactly the same approach to education. Perhaps that is why, for many many years, families in rural and remote Australia, including the

Northern Territory, have been providing the compulsory supervision of students in their home school rooms, which leads me to the Distance Education Teaching Allowance.

Earlier this year, in a joint meeting attended by ICPA State and Federal Council Presidents and Secretaries, Federal Council advised that the Federal Minister for Education had made a clear statement that it is a State responsibility to provide what is required for distance education, including compulsory supervision.

In the Northern Territory, and I quote from a Territory Government website: *'It is the expectation that all school aged students on School of the Air or NT School of Distance Education have a supervisor or tutor to oversee their studies'*.

Yes, government schools are free for Australian citizens and permanent residents, but in the Northern Territory at least, government schools are not actually free for families enrolled in schools of the air or distance education. That is because you must also provide, at your own cost, a supervisor; which we all know either costs the family directly (as the parent who can't work because of this responsibility), or indirectly - via an employment package for a governess.

Can you imagine any government asking a suburban mainstream family to provide full-time supervision for their student? I certainly can't, and I'm not sure why governments think it's reasonable to ask it of distance education families, either.

We've all heard the ignorant argument "you choose to live where you live" - meanwhile governments on all levels are investing billions, literally billions, into regional development strategies.

Let's be clear. We choose to live in rural and remote Australia because *'around two thirds of Australia's export earnings come from regional industries such as agriculture, tourism, retail, services and manufacturing. Australia's regions are ... integral to our values and sense of identity, which come from our unique and diverse culture, landscape, history and people'* <https://www.regional.gov.au/regional/>.

Or this, from one of the many national strategies, *'It is only logical that we should invest in Australia's regions because Australia's regions power Australia's economy. Investing in our regions pays massive dividends for our nation—strong regions are the foundation of a strong Australia'*. (Regions 2030—Unlocking Opportunity).

At our state conference in March, a motion was passed asking State Council to lobby the NT Government to establish a Distance Education Teaching Allowance (DETA) in recognition of the role the home tutor plays in educating geographically isolated students via distance education.

Given the dearth of support we receive from the Territory Government at this stage, it's improbable our calls for a DETA will be realised any time soon. In the meantime the NT encourages and applauds Federal Council for continuing its DETA advocacy

and we encourage ICPA members across Australia to consider DETA for what it is - the cost of delivering a public service. I think COVID went some way to showing the world what a commitment and impost that service can be on students, families and livelihoods.

There are economic reasons why education is compulsory and why governments supply public education to all Australian citizens, in return for taxes. We, rural and remote families, should not be financially penalised for where we live.

Following the Christmas break, and just as we were starting to fire-up for 2020, COVID took the ear and time of every education stakeholder in our world, no doubt in your world too. It's been hard for me as President, knowing there is so much to do but also, it's been hard for our Council finding enough time to commit to ICPA.

The Territory is a small jurisdiction so it's not unusual for State Councillors to also be involved in keeping our communities strong and vibrant. This year though, perhaps due to COVID or the fact that drought conditions are still prevalent across parts of the Territory, many of us have struggled to find time for our portfolio and associated ICPA commitments.

So, as I write this, I look forward to more rain, less COVID and more opportunities with my fellow ICPA Councillors to advocate on our motions. I also hope, following our state government election in August, that ICPA NT will be reinvigorated, working with a government who appreciates the value geographically isolated families bring to our regions, our communities and our future.

I close by expressing my sincere appreciation and thanks to ICPA NT State Councillors Suzanne Wilson, Katie Payne, Rebecca Cadzow, Moira Lanzarin, Amanda Murphy, Amber Driver, Heidi Millership, Sarah Measey, Bianca Brown and Kerrie Scott.

I also warmly acknowledge our Down the Track magazine Editor Annika Bell who has produced some amazing work in her first year, and welcome our new Patron, Her Honour the Honourable Vicki O'Halloran AO, Administrator of the Northern Territory, following Mrs Jan Heaslip OAM who spent many years in this role.

Very importantly, I wish to thank all ICPA branch members in the Northern Territory; you are our whole reason for being.

This year I have felt especially grateful to all ICPA Members, Branches, State and Federal Councils, for being a united, well connected and clever bunch of committed people who advocate for equity in education for all rural and remote students, Australia wide.

ICPA is indeed a magnificent organisation.

**SARAH COOK –
ICPA NT
President**



"Thank You"



EARLY CHILDHOOD PORTFOLIO Change of Hands

Families inquiring about Early Childhood, In-Home Care and Mobile Playgroups have become familiar with Anna Weir over the past three years.

At our State Conference, Anna handed in the reins. We will miss Anna on State Council, she barely missed a meeting and gave her portfolio responsibilities 100%. Thank you Anna!

Bianca Brown took over from Anna for a short period before the reins were passed on to Rebecca Mohr-Bell who has now taken on the Early Childhood portfolio.



NEW TREASURER FOR STATE COUNCIL

Sarah Measey has been the NT State Council Treasurer for over four years.

This year, Sarah 'hands the books' over to Moira Lanzarin.

Thank you Sarah for the many hours - and years - you have committed to making sure our accounts, records and association responsibilities were well taken care of.

We are pleased Sarah remains on State Council as the Rural and Remote Schools Portfolio Leader.

Katherine Branch Presidents Report

July 2020

It is with much excitement that I get to present this Presidents report at a face to face branch meeting. It has been a long year, and whilst we are all used to isolation, it has been particularly difficult for those children that had to miss vital contact events that they rely on so heavily to connect with peers during that first part of the year.

Nevertheless, whilst we attempt to press on, we have a long road ahead with border closures and contact restrictions that will inevitably continue for a long while yet.

The biggest impact on our Branch activities so far has been the postponement of our Mataranka Sports Camp until October. This year we will be running as a stand alone event, adding an extra half day to our schedule, and making some adjustments to the program to suit. We've been lucky enough to maintain all of our sponsorship, including success with the Roper Gulf Community Grant for Round 3. Average temperature for October is similar to the temperatures early April, but we will endeavor to include plenty of ice breaks and shady participation areas.

It has been Branch business as usual with plenty of Personal Development Grant applications awarded, and our ICT Grant applications to be open from 1st August until 1st October. Although our fundraising efforts are hindered by Covid-19 this year, we will continue to offer all of our grants and sponsorship. A letter was sent out to members earlier this year after our March meeting, which touched on clarification of members expectations toward access to grants and bursaries, member participation, and branch membership. Should you require any further information on this, please do not hesitate to speak with me.

The border closures and travel restrictions impacted heavily on our interstate boarding students and their families. Many children were left in limbo regarding how they would complete their studies, and when they could return to school, leaving many to feel anxious and confused. We thank our State Council who have been working tirelessly on this, liaising regularly with NT Department of Education and our interstate ICPA councilors. There is still plenty of work to be done in this space, and it is a credit to our State Council that they work on such a level with the Ministers and Department of Education relying heavily on their input and unique understanding of this situation.

If one good thing has come from all of this, it is that the world finally had a taste, just a tiny bite, of what we go through every single day trying to educate our kids. I still think there is a level of disbelief that we actually have to be entirely responsible for the delivery of our children's education, but I am confident there were a few eyes opened to our struggles....and a few doors that opened in our favor. It was interesting to note, however, how easy and quick it was for the powers that be to increase data allowances for the entire country overnight, when we've been asking them to help our tiny cohort of isolated students struggling with outdated systems and expensive limited schoolroom internet for so long.

Lets look forward to a better second half of 2020, appreciate that we are in the safest place in the world right now, and enjoy the extra time at home without all the external obligations that tend to consume us.

KERRIE SCOTT

OF CENTRAL AUSTRALIA (IN THE TIME OF COVID19)

The ochre painted ranges of Central Australia loom large as the sun slips to the west. The intense glow subsumes its rocks and plateaus and ridges, one by one, into a wall of fire. It is pure, iridescent gold.

Sitting long and high, running east to west as far as the eye can see, the MacDonnell Ranges are impenetrable and ancient, a marker separating the landscapes of the north and south. They kiss the horizon, which in turn is framed by a huge blue bowl of sky, still shining and splendid - even at sunset.

The human world around me is falling apart with Covid19, but these ancient ranges, steep and rocky and high, touch the sky and the sun – or is it that the sky and the sun touch them? - as they have done for millions of years, and continue to do so every morning and night. They offer the inexpressible comfort of longevity, of strength, of survival - of things that last.

I pick my way along a track. The ground underneath is flat and sandy, curving around the wide, dry Todd River bed, flanked by huge, white ghost gums. The ranges tower overhead. I feel my heart swell, burst, at their beauty and dependability.

So yes, the world is in crisis, but for the moment I am held, bathed in the reassurance of this landscape.

People dramas come and go, but this former inland sea remains unchanging.

Covid 19 has changed our lives. We now live in fear of a little virus that has the capacity to wipe us all out. We no longer travel as we did, or mingle as we once enjoyed, or connect with friends and family far away.

Distance has always been a challenge for those who live isolated lives, particularly in Central Australia - one thousand miles to the north and south from the nearest capital cities - but now enforced distancing is cruel on those who otherwise live cheek by jowl in cities like Melbourne and Sydney.

Isolation has taken on a different meaning for everyone. You do not need to live in the middle of nowhere to be isolated from friends and family – you just need to be frail and vulnerable and confined to an old folk's home, or stuck inside an apartment in a huge block of flats, or on the wrong side of a state border. For the first time in a very long time, Australia now understands isolation in a very different way, and is impacted by it at every level.

We see it on our evening television news every night.

Of course, Australia had always known isolation – we live at the bottom of the world, a long way away from most other continents and countries. We have grown up with the myths of outback legends, who roamed the plains and the empty rivers of the inland, moving cattle on horseback, surviving where others didn't. Including explorers like Burke and Wills. And most Australians know that in the centre of Australia sits a huge rock called Uluru, and that Uluru in turn sits in the middle of an empty, red desert.

It's why most people live in the city and on or near the coast. One thing to look at the outback in a glossy photo, or even visit it on holiday; another entirely to want to live in it. Our landscape is too harsh, and too far from the luxuries of life now taken for granted - good coffee shops (good shops generally), good medical health, good schools, good restaurants. It's one thing to learn the Banjo Patterson and Henry Lawson poems at school – even the Man from Snowy River – another to venture inland, much less live there.

And Australia is a generally dry and dusty place, even if you

don't live in the outback. Remote and regional areas face equally tough isolation issues. With climate change, our country is getting drier, and more difficult to live in. We only need to look at how bushfires and drought have ravaged our remote and regional areas with increasing ferocity. We've seen fires destroy places once considered immune: seaside villages, dairy valleys and forest hamlets. Even – unbelievably – the fringes of city suburbs. Who could forget Western Sydney, at the foot of the Blue Mountains, under threat from the huge bushfires earlier this year? Previously unthinkable. And similarly, the outer suburbs of Canberra, which also went through terrible bushfires back in 2003?

Australia entered 2020 in shock and grief due to these fires, and those woes have been compounded by the mental and physical and emotional impacts of a new form of isolation.

Once such problems were mostly rural and regional; a young mum stuck out in the middle of nowhere, with little children and no support, going crazy; a farmer committing suicide because he's had to kill one too many of his dying stock during one too many years of dreadful drought. Now towns and sea-hugging cities around Australia are now facing their own form of isolation.

No one could possibly have imagined how that would have played out.

At the start of the year it was impossible to think that you couldn't even walk to your neighbour's house and chat together, hug your friend on their birthday, hold the hand of a grandmother locked up in the care facility, or jump on a plane and visit a dying loved one. In fact, jump on a plane and go anywhere for any reason. Who would have imagined you'd now need papers to get across borders (like occupied Europe of old), assuming you could get across the border at all.

In particular, who would have imagined that in Alice Springs there'd be blockades on each road leading out of town? That you'd need permission and papers to get to certain places? Even daily checks from the police and army to get from one side of a cattle station to the other, split by a road heading north?

At least those of us who live in the outback, and remote and rural areas, have an understanding of physical isolation and experience in how to manage it. But now people in the most confined spaces in the busiest cities know it, feel it, without having any experience at all. The mental health toll of lockdown will be played out for years to come. Families locked down in suburban houses, staring endlessly at walls, children going crazy. Families not being able to see, much less say goodbye, to their dying loved ones. Especially in confused and unhappy circumstances like old folk's homes. The ultimate indignity, tragedy, grief.

Yet we are also lucky. Australia's population is relatively small, because of our harsh landscape and isolation from the rest of the world. As a result, our trauma is so much less than the densely occupied countries, and especially the impoverished, densely occupied countries. When I think of the terrible photographs of bodies being heaped one on top of the other in mobile morgues in not so impoverished countries – think Greece - I'm reminded of the terrible images of the Holocaust, and can hardly believe this is our world in 2020.

So I remind myself it is good to be thankful, despite the challenges we face. It prompts memories of Mum saying to us as kids: "eat your vegetables, think of the starving children in India." My siblings and I would mutter under our breath, "let 'em have 'em." But now, we are all inextricably intertwined, in some ways further apart than

ever, in other ways closer – and the impact of isolation has impacted the world forever, and Australia is no different.

I wish I could give my vegetables to not only the starving children in India, but the increasing number of people in impoverished countries who are already so badly impacted by this lockdown. And then of course it's local. What about the people in that apartment block in Melbourne who struggled to get food for a while? Bless the Indian community – largely the Sikhs – who turned up in their vans and sent food up into those apartments, curry by curry.

Our world has changed with Covid19. Great and wonderful and heroic acts have taken place during this time. And quiet and humble ones as well, such as the Sikh community, who also did the same thing earlier this year, feeding the exhausted bush firefighters and traumatised Australians who'd lost everything in the fires.

This year is too wearying, appalling, sad. We switch off the television, turn away from the news, turn back to what is simple and over which we can have some control.

Try to hope it doesn't happen to us next. Or people we love.

And try to work out how to live in this new world of isolation – a new type of aloneness, loneliness, distancing – loving friends and family, without touching.

Even in the bush.

That's why when I walk at sunset, along the curving, dry creek bed and gaze up at the magnificent, glowing red MacDonnell Ranges, I think how lucky I am.

And how lucky bush people are generally.

First, because we grew up in the outback and live here, we understand isolation and have many skills to cope with its downsides. Education of children at home is the norm – not the exception.

Secondly, we have this magnificent landscape to nurture and sustain us. It has seen untold numbers of humans come and go, but here it remains in all its splendour – largely untouched and unchanged. In the bush, I'm not locked inside a suburban house, going stir crazy. I have a big blue sky and fresh air and sunshine – and my beautiful MacDonnell Ranges to gaze at and soak into my soul.

There's something about being very small in the presence of nature's grandeur to give a sense of perspective – and then, from that, hope and gratitude.

The land gives us strength. Aboriginal people have known that for millennia. We can draw the land into our beings, up through our boots, through our bodies and into our hearts and heads, hold it and thank it. There is nothing as strong or as powerful (to me, at least) as our outback Australian landscape – and especially our MacDonnell Ranges – which have seen humans come and go, yet daily put on a glorious show of colour and power.

So, for however long we remain isolated in these different ways, I will be glad and grateful for those ancient MacDonnell Ranges, and the landscape on which they sit. Their message to me is one of resilience, of courage, and of never giving up.

And, of course, I will remain grateful for my vegetables.

Thanks Mum

TANYA HEASLIP
AUTHOR AND ICPA NT LONE MEMBER





**CONNELLAN
AIRWAYS TRUST**

Hello Down the Track friends,

What an interesting (this word is nicer than what I'm actually thinking) year it has been. So many events and experiences on hold. We are lucky in the NT to be venturing into a little more 'normal' than some of the other states.

For those who don't know me, my name is Jessica and I'm the executive officer with Connellan Airways Trust. I'm about 15 months into the role and, seriously, you are stuck with me now.

The Trust has been supporting people in the outback since 1981.

We have closely partnered with ICPA for many years in support of education (and health) outcomes for the bush. At the moment, as well as grant rounds, the Trust has been working behind the scenes on updating a range of tools to enable better experiences when applying and looking at our grants. Our new website is live. Head over to www.connellanairwaystrust.org.au and have a look. We are proud to be showcasing the hard work and dedication of people like you, living in the outback.

Our grants assist people to make things happen, to reach for goals, and provide support where it may not be otherwise available.

You might even see someone that you know and learn about their amazing experience.

The Trust Chair (Mark Coffey) and I recently went visiting people throughout the south of the NT. We have several more trips planned for the remaining part of the year. Thank you to those who welcomed us into your homes, and I look forward to touching base with more people in person. It's a great opportunity for me to get to know people more, learn where you think the Trust could be focusing and what really makes a positive impact for families out bush.

We want to ensure that the Trust is providing relevant and engaging grant opportunities. So, get your thinking caps on and if you are keen for a visit, let me know.

The Roger Connellan Award recipient for 2020 (at the time of writing this) is soon to be announced. This is a fantastic opportunity for someone looking to advance their professional development in aviation. It is a tricky time for the industry, but worth putting in an application if you are considering your options. Last year's recipient Sam recently completed his endorsements and is now out mustering with his helicopter license. Congratulations to Sam. And Jo, the first recipient of this award in 2017 also finished his licensing this year. It was a long journey for Jo with some unforeseen complications along the way. Congratulations on making it, Jo. He continues to provide primary eye care (he is an optometrist) to people out bush. He flies in, provides eye care and flies out again. His additional ratings have made him a safer pilot and enabled longer trips for optimised eye care.

Did you know that the Trust is turning 40 next year?

We are excited! Keep an eye out for news of what we are planning to celebrate. It's going to be fun. After a year of no events and such, I think we are all in need of something fun.

A reminder that general grants are available to support a range of activities. Although we cut off at certain points in the year, we do consider applications that are time sensitive as needed and we are moving to a more responsive turn around. You can always give me a call for a chat if you want to discuss your options and how a grant could assist you.

The Trust continues to improve the lives of those living in the outback, and we hope we can do this for, and with, you.

We know that investing in individuals and organisations like ICPA and ICPA members is investing in educated, healthy and thriving outback communities.

Until next time.

**Jessica Hackett
Executive Officer**



TOP: Jessica whilst visiting the south of the NT, MIDDLE: Chair Mark Coffey with Mount Riddock Station members Abbro, Fran and Rebecca, BOTTOM: Chair Mark Coffey on the road

"Thank You"

BEN COUTTS

for loaning ICPA NT State Council your office space for our face to face meeting in Katherine recently.

Your generosity was very much appreciated.

ALICE SPRINGS CLP BRANCH

For donating \$100 at a 'Democracy Sausage Sizzle' on NT Election Day.

Your generosity was very much appreciated.

"Thank You"

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Nearly six months of semi-isolation has provided more time to indulge in many more years of memories. Sitting on the veranda on a typical dry season day, a slight breeze, moderate temperature and Mozart playing against a backdrop of shifting shadows, my selective memory dwells on some of the events that have shaped the lives of an ordinary "outback" family.

The first thought that comes to mind, is the speed at which our lives have changed over the past sixty years of my time in the Territory.

In 1959, a flight from Melbourne to Darwin, with stopovers in Sydney, Brisbane and Mount Isa, took thirteen hours. Camping in swags in Arnhem Land under the shade of Norlangie Rock, chasing buffalo across the plains, then taking up two thousand square miles of virgin country in the Victoria River District when it was all hands-on deck to establish our own Shangri La.

Packing the mules in preparation for a six week mustering stint with three little children in tow and palpable excitement about what we might encounter in the weeks ahead – replaced with helicopters cutting the time down to days; remote controlled bores; trucking cattle to destinations instead of weeks of walking them to points of sale. From kerosene lamps and fridges to bright lights, freezers, bread makers and air-conditioners; bitumen covering the deeply rutted, bull-dusty track that has become a main highway and reduced a five-hour trip to town to three hours.

From the High Frequency radio to the internet and space exploration to Mars and beyond; instant contact to anywhere in the world via social media, online chats and a dozen other contacts about which I know nothing and have to ask my grandchildren "how?", and then, often, myself, "why?"; television (smart at that!) where instant news from endless "experts" in every field convince us we should not make a move without their advice.

Where the truth and nothing but the truth belongs only in the courtroom, most certainly not in the world of journalism where pseudo/contrived knowledge in sync with ratings, appears to be the guiding premise.

So many changes have taken place over the past half century, the period deserves an official title – and will probably get one – one day! Education from 1966 to 2020 has been subject to change, much of which has been retrograde, but more, exciting and with the potential to provide our children with unlimited opportunities.

This period in our lives is temporary, Phoenix shall rise and I, quite frankly, am quite miffed I shall not be around in the next fifty years to see and experience the genius that will emerge following a necessary hiatus in the system.

Inevitably, my thoughts turn to my dear Mama's wise words as we left Melbourne on the long trip on a dirt highway to Kulgera, then onto Darwin – "Patricia Ann, you realize the education of these precious little boys falls squarely on your shoulders." The least of my worries, that was four years away and it had all been done before. In 1966, reality kicked in and my role as general dogsbody was modified to include supervising our oldest son's launch into the world of formal learning.

By 1982 our youngest was out of early childhood – not my favourite area of expertise and bringing to mind the wise advice of my supervising teacher when my time of early childhood practical instruction included several weeks in a training school, and my final assessment was given to me –

"Thankyou Miss Siggins for your time with us. The children and I have enjoyed your company.....I would suggest you do not choose early childhood as your specialty..."

It was never my intention, but the experience was invaluable.

I dearly love little children, but from an education point of view, I relate more effectively with those from puberty on!

Secondary schooling followed with one or two opportunities to send those who wanted to experience boarding school, away. Our oldest daughter spent a year at Glennie in Toowoomba, a year in which she took advantage of every

chance to take part in the different cultural experiences available to her. She did, however return home to complete years eleven and twelve. There is no doubt it stood in her stead when she finished and attended Melbourne University to complete her Maths/Science degree. Interestingly, she chose to complete her Diploma of Education externally, while taking a post tertiary gap year, cooking on a station in the top end.

Number three son lasted a semester of year ten in Queensland when I received a radio telephone call from Mount Isa asking if I would pick him up in Katherine the following morning!

"How did you manage to get there Cam? (over)"

"I sold my rugby boots and pocketknife Mum – will you be there please? (over)"

Yes, we did have a call from the School, and yes, we did know what he had done. I did drive into Katherine to pick him up.

The choice to send your children away or keep them at home is a very personal decision that only you can make. There is a plethora of reasons why you make these decisions, your children already have the great advantage of being independent learners who have the ability to self-isolate. It is always a challenge, but geographically isolated students cope better than most.

In 1989 the children's father, and my rock, suddenly and unexpectedly departed this mortal coil as the result of an asthma attack. Since that time we have had only two other occasions when we have all been together. The first on our second son's fiftieth birthday and in 2018 when a tragic, freak accident on the Daly River claimed the life of a precious daughter, sister, wife and mother, resulting in another family get together, this time with a gaping void.

Covid has put paid to our intended Christmas together in Victoria this year and plans for a combined oldest son's

sixtieth and number three daughter's fiftieth, in 2021 is in the pipeline. Will it happen?

We live with the anticipation of how wonderful it will be, but if it does not happen, we will deal with it at the time. The old adage still applies – "Anticipation is two thirds realization".

These random thoughts become significant in today's climate and the advent of Christmas not too far away.

We have learnt that time has become relevant in making plans; however, Christmas at home this year is a distinct possibility, indeed, probability. Intentions for 2020 may not have eventuated, nor plans realized. This is, of course accentuated by the unique circumstances of this year or, maybe, could it have been a possibility anyway?

A potent mix of the emotional, psychological and the tangible is an interesting phenomenon. To maintain a balance is often difficult when the physical circumstances put the mix to the test.

Mindfulness is the current expression to describe the above. It describes the combination of circumstances that dictate our behaviour. We seem to no longer accept the natural progression of things; we must be aware – mindful of everything, every thought, every detail around us. We pay attention, be wary and questioning. Whilst this should have positive implications, there are times when we need to allow ourselves to stop, be still and accept that we have the capability to deal with most situations without having someone else to tell us how and why we should behave in a particular way. Outcomes may not always be what we want, or even need, but maintaining the ability to control our own situation strengthens our own resolve and helps create alternative behaviours.

Remember, it is not the problem with which you are faced, but the way in which you deal with it.

For most of us, the next couple of months brings the end of the school year close, or, to an end. School was always a priority in our house, and with the legacy of having eight children plus a number of extras, time flew. Secondary students required regular and (self) disciplined study time to focus on those last assessments that would dictate future aspirations, but thoughts and initial preparations included Christmas.

This year Christmas as we know may be very different. It is the time when we join family and friends in an environment where we can relax and indulge in physical social interaction – a different place, different dynamics. It is a time when extended families are re-united; grandparents, great-grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, nieces, nephews, and so the list goes on.

Instead of hearing about the window displays to be visited, the booking of tickets for Carols by Candlelight, the Australian Open, Cricket or the latest theatre production or musical celebrity to visit your nearest venue, that white Christmas you always planned and are now free to make, we look to virtual tours, Netflix (etc) and online shopping, recipes and virtual overseas adventures to fill the void. A planned trip to Leeds University, England, to visit a grandson and his wife followed by "calling in" on a sister in New York on the way home, on hold.

Conversely, I am mindful of those for whom Christmas is a lonely time and when the reality of being alone can become overwhelming.

We cannot always solve these problems, but where we can make a little difference, we should, for the central message of every religion and all theology, in all cultures, is love.

Many of you may make the time to visit family in states where Covid keeps rearing its evil head and will require quarantining on return to the Territory.

If you are able to make that choice, it will have been calculated at the lowest possible risk to your family and those with whom you come in contact. For others the risk may be too great.

As our family is flung far and wide, we have elected to uphold family traditions wherever we happen to be. The Christmas cakes and puddings will be cooked in October and trees, lights etc, coordinated to be decorated twelve days before Christmas. It will be an orphans Christmas in our Territory home – whoever is around at the time will visit at any time it suits them. A traditional Australian/ British dinner on Christmas day, but open doors for the whole festive period. I have a Father Christmas taking his forty eighth position on the cake. In homes where there are children, Santa delivers his goods and any presents from each other on the tree, are kept until after dinner/ lunch and dishes done! The only day in the year in our house where there was no argument about who was on the dishes roster!! Father would then distribute the presents. I think this plan grew from drawing the day out so the kids would be occupied the whole day and give us time to just enjoy watching their joy.

How will Christmas with Covid look to you?

Wherever it may be, whatever it may be, may the message of love and healing become the pattern of our future. Nature is showing us in no uncertain terms, it is possible.

"Sometimes I just sits and thinks and sometimes I just sits"

Anonymous.



BEHIND THE SCENES WITH ICPA NT STATE COUNCIL

Normally, State Council makes 2 delegation trips to Darwin a year where we meet with Ministers, government departments and other major stakeholders, advocating on your motions.

At the end of last year/2019, before our November delegations, State Council decided to compile a paper outlining the Top 5 Priorities that flowed from your motions.

To begin our pitch in the lead up to the Territory election, we made an extra effort to meet as many serving politicians as possible & took our **Top 5 Priorities** document to all the meetings. This turned out to be a good strategy, because of course we weren't able to go ahead with our first round of delegations in 2020, due to the on-going focus on Covid19.

As the Territory election got closer, in a conscious effort to meet as many candidates as possible, NT State President Sarah Cook presented our Top 5 Priorities in a speech to a large CLP function, where she was heard by a majority of the CLP candidates standing for regional & remote seats, together with Senator Sam McMahon, CLP advisors & supporters.

In July, State Council met face to face in Katherine, where we discussed a range of issues including Grants & Bursary's (now simply called Bursary's & still under the trust of Helen Harding); the Treasurers role & record keeping; our responsibilities around Child Safety Policy's; and how we get our message out to members & stakeholders alike, including a great discussion with our current **Down The Track** (DTT) editor, Annika Bell, and previous editor Ruth Woerle, who have both made a huge contribution to ICPA in their stewardship and work on ICPA NT's DTT magazine.

State Council resolved to **combine the editor & webmaster roles**, and Annika Bell is now responsible for both, which we think is necessary and sensible. Annika is presently working with ICPA Federal Council in the development & design of our new website (for all levels of ICPA), which is expected to be launched toward the end of this year.

On the Monday following our face to face meet in Katherine, Sue Wilson (Vice President) and Sarah Cook (President) had a day 'to spare' in between the Katherine Branch meeting/ lunch on Tuesday, and met with every politician/candidate available, including the Education Minister, Selena Uiibo MLA (who has an electorate office in Katherine), the Katherine Isolated Children's Services Coordinator & Board Members and a consultant who provided advice around the NDIS scheme, specifically with our members in mind.

Our next State Council delegation to Darwin will take place on 12 -13 November 2020 and our 2021 State Conference will be held in Alice Springs on Tuesday 2 March.

If you wish to supply case study's for State Council to use on delegation - or at any time - (*for example "this is happening to me, this is why it happens, this is what I think would be a better solution"*) please contact anyone on State Council – see website for contact details. We LOVE case studies!

In the meantime, NT State Council continues to advocate on your motions through phone calls, letters, and social media and in our alliances with ICPA Federal and State Councils across Australia.

Thank you for your support.
SARAH COOK - NT STATE PRESIDENT



Above L: Sarah Cook meeting at a CLP function to present the Top 5 Priorities. R: Kerrie Scott and Sarah Cook speaking at the Katherine Branch Special Luncheon .
Below L: Suzanne Wilson and Sarah Cook with Selena Uiibo MLA R: Members of State Council in Katherine in July





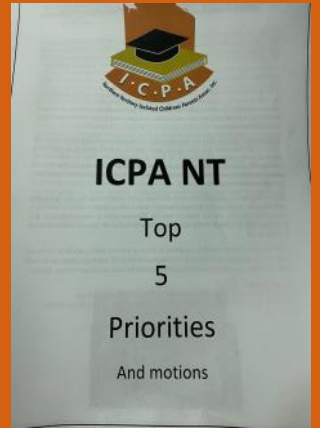
Row 1 - L: Moira Lanzarin, Bernadette Burke and Emma Brown at the Katherine Branch Special Luncheon. R: State Council Members meeting in Katherine in July.

Left: State Council Members coming together in Katherine.

Below Row 1 - L: Jo Hersey (CLP Katherine), Sarah Cook and Suzanne Wilson. R: State Council members in discussions with DTT Editor Annika Bell.

Below Row 2 - L: Katie Payne, Kerrie Scott, Sarah Cook and Moira Lanzarin at the Katherine Branch Luncheon. R: Suzanne Wilson and Ruth Woerle.

Below Row 3 - L: Rohan Sullivan, Sarah Cook and Danny Skewes. Centre: Senator Sam McMahon, Sarah Cook and Lachlan Hunter - Acting State Director for The Nationals, WA. R: Sarah Cook on Federal Conference Webinar whilst travelling.



SIBA SHIPS - WELLARD RURAL EXPORTS 'BRIDGING THE GAP' GRANT 2020

SECOND ROUND SUCCESSFUL APPLICANT - SALLY SHAW



My family own a cattle station in the East Kimberly region of Western Australia which my parents purchased together 20 years ago. This property is located 250km from our closest town of Kununurra along both gravel and highway roads. The geographical

location of our home physically places myself and my family in isolation from resources and other people.

My family first became involved with the ICPA in 2002, my whole family has since then every year been a member of ICPA. We have personally as a family greatly appreciated the work of the ICPA over the years in bringing people in rural areas closer together and providing them with continual support and assistance through the hardships associated with living in an isolated area.

From prep to year 5 I was enrolled in Katherine School of the Air, where schooling was done from home, at first over a two-way radio and then in later years via a computer web-cam. From years 6-12 I was enrolled in Geelong College in Victoria

After completing year 12 in 2017 I relocated

to Perth where I am attending The University of Western Australia and am lucky enough to be studying undergraduate medicine. This will hopefully lead me down a career pathway of becoming a medical professional in rural areas of Australia, such as the one where I grew up. Hopefully sometime in the future I would love to be part of a group or establish a group that travels around isolated and rural parts of the country, ideally the Kimberley region where I am from.

To pursue my chosen education path, I must move interstate to attend university in Perth which is a significant distance away from my home, fees associated with travelling to university and back to the station during holidays to visit my family are significant and having any kind of financial support during this time would be greatly appreciated and valued by both myself and my family. The generous ICPA grant, should I be lucky enough to receive it will be used in part to purchase air fares back to Kununurra which would be greatly appreciated by both myself and my family. In cases of formal university events where parents and family can attend, I would be very grateful for my parents to be able to come to Perth and visit me. The additional funds from this bursary would be used for both me to visit my family and home and for my parents to visit me.

Moving interstate has meant that living on campus in one of the university residential colleges is the best option for me in the first few years of my course. Living in an unfamiliar city and making new friends and relationships in university I believe is made a lot easier by living on campus with a large group of similar young adults. I feel that the lifelong friendships that are often formed during university can be formed during the first few years of my course and I think that being part of a College at university will

provide me with an inclusive environment where the formation of friendships are fostered. Unfortunately living in a college is very expensive at \$20,000 per year. While I am lucky enough to have a family who are willing to make the significant sacrifices necessary for me to enrol in a college, the cost is significant and the bursary from ICPA will be put to good use in assisting with the cost of living on campus at the University of Western Australia this year. I will still be required to find a job so that I can pay for a proportion of the living costs, potentially working in a café in my free time this semester while I am not studying, this way I can assist with some of the costs associated. Given this situation, support in the form of a grant would significantly relieve the financial pressures placed upon my family.

Completing a six to eight year university degree involves the purchasing of many text books and academic resources. While second hand textbooks are much cheaper and I am looking for ways to minimise the costs of tertiary resources, the expenses of such essential books are incredibly large and difficult to afford every year. Any form of financial support would be well utilised in assisting me to purchase such books and other stationary items that are crucial for the completion of my course. Ensuring that I am able to afford the books and resources necessary to complete my degree is very important and I feel that the generous bursary will enable me to have the funds required to purchase such items.

Thank you for considering my application,
Sally Shaw

**WELL DONE AND
CONGRATULATIONS TO SALLY!**

ICT GRANT WINNERS

THE CRAIG FAMILY OF MISTAKE CREEK STATION

Brodie is a boarder at St Ursula's College, and Steven boards at St Brendan's College - both in Yeppoon QLD.

How Technology Helps Me Learn

When I think of technology I think of laptops and internet and how they both help with learning.

Technology helps bring the world closer to me, I need to use the internet while I am on my laptop so I can research information for school work during class and after school.

My laptop also helps me learn. When I'm writing paragraphs/essays for my assignments it tells me if I have made a spelling or grammar mistake and ways I can fix it. It also helps with counting all my words so then I know if I need more or less.

It helps me to learn in different ways, as people all learn differently it shows me this is a different way it could be done, it is like having a different teacher in classroom.

It also helps mum and dad stay connected with the school and the progresses and achievements that I am making. I think technology is a powerful tool helps me learn.

I just want to thank the Katherine ICPA for the \$500 gift voucher, it has really helped me out a lot.

BRODIE CRAIG

Technology helps me to learn by giving me feedback on the words and sentences that I write.

It also helps me to call my teachers or those who help me e.g. teachers.

Technology can help many other people to know what I am up to and if I possibly need help with any of my work.

With technology at school you can talk to the teacher without interrupting the class and the other students around you.

The last thing that it helps you with is, it helps you learn from mistakes and allows you to look for your future. This is how it helps me learn.

Thank you very much to the Katherine ICPA for the \$500 gift voucher.

STEVEN (WOBBLES) CRAIG

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CRAIG FAMILY!



Steven and Brodie Craig of Mistake Creek Station

ICPA 'PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT' GRANTS

Personal Development Grants (Available to pre-primary children and all students, from Primary to Post-secondary.) Grants are to assist families with costs associated with activities related to personal development of the child, for example, Sport, Music, Drama, Excursions, Art and Craft.

Below are some of the many PD Grant applications that were submitted this year.



ELSEY MILLERSHIP - 5yrs

Elsey drew this fantastic picture to show her need for a new horse-riding helmet to wear whilst she is mustering and participating in campdrafts.

AMY SCHILLING - 13yrs

Hi, My name is Amy schilling and this year we are going to school in Darwin. I live in Darwin with my Mum and Sister and we get to go home on holidays, to Leila Creek. I miss home very much especially my horses. When I stated at Nightcliff Middle school I met a lady who knew a trainer down at the racecourse. He said that I could come down and get my horse fix. I clean out the stables and feed the horses, I love the cuddles I can get. He has asked me if I wanted to sometimes in the morning to go down to Beach and ride one of the horses in the water for training WOW I thought I always wanted to ride a horse down the beach.

I have been borrowing a Vest to wear but really need one of my own . They are very expensive, so I was hoping that ICPA could maybe help with some of this cost. I really am learning so much about what happens at the Racecourse and I so much love being with the horses.

CHARLIE COOK - 9yrs

BLAKE COOK - 7yrs

Charlie and Blake applied for the Professional Development Grants to assist with their online / ZOOM Drama classes.

Below is a screenshot of one of their classes.



BRODIE CRAIG - 15yrs

I have a passion for photography and it is something that I can do while I am at school. I don't have one certain thing that I love to photo more then anything else. It is just looking through the lens to see what can come out at the other end. I am saving for a camera to help me develop my skills.

Thank you very much



ABE BRACEY - 14 yrs

"I am a Rodeo Clown and I need a new shirt to go with my clowning costume for rodeo as the one that I got last year has worn out. Most of the rodeos were shut down due to Covid19 but thankfully there are still a few on."



MIKALA CRAIG - 11yrs

I like doing art it is a lot of fun. With the money I would buy my own pencils, oil and acrylic paint, an art book, markers, paint brush set and some crayons so I can get better at art.

BRIAN STOCKWELL - 20yrs

Following the transition to full online learning for Semester 1, the University of Queensland Gatton campus has partially reopened to allow for online learning with the addition of in-person practical classes. Practicals are a crucial aspect of my degree's experience, as the hands-on aspect greatly increases my understanding and interest in the topic, as I am able to gain a better understanding of the real-world implications of the topics we learn in lectures. Practical classes I sadly missed this semester due to the coronavirus shutdown included preparation and analysis of different silage samples, gene identification and expression and vitamin and enzyme behaviour. As the option for practicals has become open, I will be travelling back to Gatton in July to further my education.

In addition to travelling back for my education, being in Gatton also allows me to contribute to the community. I was elected to be part of 2020's resident's club, which runs events for the community who stay on campus in colleges to help cultivate a community. The one event I was able to run before coronavirus put a stop to all events was the World's Greatest Shave, where as a community, Gatton Halls of Residence raised over \$5,000 for the Leukaemia Foundation. I also took up a tutoring role where I tutored the first-year course "Applied Maths and Statistics" for residents. I hope to be able to contribute to the community in a similar fashion on my return.

Obviously costs involved involve both halls fees and the cost of a plane ticket, and so any money from this grant would be a great help towards making those finances a bit more manageable.

“Kids need fair crack at decent, affordable education and life security”

Katherine NTCA Branch Chair Justin Dyer's speech at the ICPA NT Katherine Branch Special Luncheon in Katherine | JULY 2020

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen and a sincere thank you for the opportunity to talk to you firstly about the Isolated Children's Parents Associations role in my own education and the synergies between the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association and ICPA.

Before I get onto that, particularly I'd like to thank Kerrie Scott, ICPA Katherine Branch President for extending an invitation to speak to you all here today. I'd also like to acknowledge all the Katherine Branch members and guests, fellow speaker Sarah Cook ICPA NT President, ICPA life members and the Honourable Selena Uibo our Territory Minister for Education - thanks for taking the time to join us all here today.

Now, for those of you I haven't had the pleasure of meeting yet, I'll give you a bit of my background as a way of introduction. As you heard earlier my name is Justin Dyer and I reside on Hayfield Station which is about halfway from here to Tennant Creek with the Stuart Highway rolling through the middle of it. Considering we are three hours from Katherine or Tennant and our dirt road driveway is only 10km before the bitumen with wet season access for heavy vehicles, Hayfield is not as isolated as many other stations here in the NT.

My parents John and Val moved to Hayfield in 1974 and have pretty much resided there ever since. All the kids, which includes Nick, Lisa and myself were born in Katherine and raised on Hayfield. Lisa and her partner Brad run what we now call Sturt Plains which is on the southern end of Hayfield; Sally and I run the northern section of Hayfield and the Shenandoah lease; Nick and his wife Kathy live in Katherine and operate Helimuster NT out of a hanger in

Katherine and Victoria River Downs Station. So, the whole family still resides here in the NT which is nice.

Nick who is the eldest started Katherine School of the Air in 1980 and by the time myself and Lisa went through in 1994 it was 14 years of KSA in total. Our classroom had not only the Dyer kids but several of the local Aboriginal children from Elliott attended who were children of some of the staff that worked at Hayfield. We always had a governess and mum used to fill in when we were in-between governesses who were prone to float for various reasons. Then it was off to boarding school which was our only option at the time and we all pretty much completed our high school in Adelaide. With Nick going on to graduate with a Batchelor in Rural Management from the University of Queensland in 2000; Lisa attending a year of environmental science at CDU Darwin in 2003 then deferring to travel overseas; and myself completing a diploma of Agribusiness Administration from Marcus Oldham College in 1999.

So, the role that the ICPA played in my primary education was to make sure that not only the children, but the mums and govies and even dads sometimes all get together for as many occasions as possible. There were gymkhanas at Timber Creek and the beef bash at NTCA AGMs organised by the ICPA. They were incredibly exciting events and good little fundraisers. ICPA also supported and lobbied funds for the School of the Air to run annual sports days, swim schools, camps and excursions. All of these “in schools” for remote children are essential for a good balanced education. They are an essential service for the children of families who, the majority of, provide an essential service, as shown by Covid by participating in

the NT Agriculture industry in one way or another.

My memories of primary school, KSA, are extremely fond ones and lifelong friendships forged. For a while later on I recall I would get my set work for two weeks, knock it out in a week or so then go out to camp and help with the stockwork out there.

Secondary schooling options were to go to boarding school, that's it, no ifs or buts about it. I remember catching the bus to Adelaide and back a few times, flying a few times and sometimes not coming home for holidays at all. I believe the ICPA managed to lobby for some boarding and travel allowance although it wasn't much, all I know for sure was that my weekly spending money started at nine dollars. All in all, I got through okay and had a bit of fun along the way.

Right, so that sounds fairly straight forward and when you say it quickly enough it would be easy to think that it is so. However, I am here to assure you that it was far from easy and that the challenges faced by pastoral station families at that time were vast and compounding. A lot of those challenges we are still facing today and frankly the list is getting bigger. Even though I believe the future is bright we need to be able to attract as much talent to the fold as we can, and having equitable access to a decent education is a deal breaker for many. I am here to talk about education so please let me indulge in two subjects that I believe are fundamental for the future. I know I might be at risk of straying out of my policy/expertise lane here but I believe it is a core issue for all and I'm here now so apologies in advance.

Firstly, social skills, social inclusion from your peers, the ability to grow and interact with other children of similar age. To develop values that mean the most when you are in a group environment with kids your own age. Such as fairness, cooperation, teamwork, patience, compassion, tolerance, kindness, the art of negotiation and leadership. Or as JD used to drum into me “either lead, follow or get out of the road!”

Growing up as a “bush kid” there are certain values that will be common

to many because of the nature of your environment you find yourself in. Isolated, interacting with working adults you will soon figure out what you need to be to become valued and accepted. Honesty is a big one, people around you need to trust that you will do what you say and if you don't then lookout. Work ethic is another; discipline, doing a job well, performing a task that might be undesirable not because you have someone looking over your shoulder or you will get scolded, but because you know it is the right thing to do; integrity, determination, facing your fears, being handy and having a sense of humour will all sit you in good stead with the rest of the "crew".

Every child born in this great country has a right to have access to free primary education, that includes costs associated with delivering that.

But a lot of the most critical values that I mentioned earlier will mainly come from social interaction with your peers, and it will be these values that will help guide you in adult life and especially if you aspire to a successful professional career. It is not one or the other but a healthy balance of both and the values that you may acquire from growing up as a bush kid, critically need to be balanced with these other community values.

Another major challenge is one that is perhaps most obvious but seems difficult to prosecute, that is equity of access to an education.

Mainly, funding for teachers aids or who we know as governesses, I can not for the life of me find a decent reason why the cost burden for these critical teachers continues to be put with the parents of children living in isolation. No one else in the NT or Australia have to pay for this essential service so why should we? And now as many parents around Australia have had to deal with the reality of home schooling and the subsequent perhaps related increase in alcohol consumption due to Covid, now would be an opportune time to lead the charge for change. Governesses, travel and accommodation to town for in school are a cost that we should not be expected to cover.

Regional families are some of the hardest working and productive people around. They contribute significantly to not only the export dollars and economy of Australia and the NT but to the social fabric of the communities we support. We keep it real, and I think it is time that it is recognised by all levels of government that our kids need a fair crack at a decent and affordable education. I don't need to tell you all here today that by jingo's they are going to need it and we will need them to keep the ship steady as we sail into the future.

Our business APN P/L have always been members of the NTCA and in fact John and Val were one of the founding members. I chose to become involved with the NTCA for the same reason

as many of you, who chose to become involved in the ICPA: To help lobby for change, to be involved in an organisation that represents grass roots families and industry and run issues up as the need arises. Importantly both NTCA and ICPA are independent from government and other outside influences and that holds our reputation of integrity up if and when our policies come under scrutiny.

My role as Katherine Branch chair is to listen to issues arising from the branch level, mediate debate around those issues and with the support of the CEO and EO bring them up to the executive level. Also reporting back from the executive to branch level and keeping an open door to any communication that arises in-between meetings. The hard decisions are made at the executive level where policy and recommendations are formed then run up to various organisations, Territory and Federal Departments. As an organisation, I think the results achieved over time speak to the ability of NTCA to do that job successfully.

Two of our core values of the NTCA are People and Unity, and under these values I think the NTCA and ICPA can absolutely work together "in support of" policies that are common to us both. Speaking as the

Katherine Branch Chair I would be happy to have a Representative from ICPA formally present issues at branch level that require a united approach, as well as direct communication to NTCA office staff at Buffalo Court as need be. ICPA are also open to become associate members, I think our relationship is closer than that, however it could help with updated correspondence from us. The NTCA works with, has close relationships and memberships with many organisations within the NT such as the NTLEA, NT Farmers and NT Road Transport Association. We collaborate often on Territory matters and present a united front when needed, or NTCA, or other associations may take the lead when appropriate with "support of" other said associations. The same can be said on a National level, the NTCA has access to resources and lines of communication to other National Organisation's such as the National Farmers Federation to help put weight behind submissions that are pertinent to our cause.

We have had a glimpse already of what the "new normal" may look like; now more than ever the importance of Agriculture is in the spot light. It is accepted that not only do we put food and fibre into every house hold in Australia but the export dollar that we generate is a foundation of our Territory and National GDP. It is indeed an exciting time for Agriculture, which by necessity is, and will remain, one of the most sustainable industries on the planet. But we need to keep upskilling ourselves and our workforce to stay on top of future challenges. Our children and their education are the key and they will need the ability to adapt and continue to learn through their whole careers. We are running businesses first and foremost and that means those businesses must succeed for the sake of us all.

In summation I personally know that the NTCA and ICPA are basically joined at the hip, and I am open to any advice on how we can improve our cooperation and help each other achieve our goals for our children and their security of a decent life and job in the future.

**Thank you
JUSTIN DYER**

ICPA NT ALICE SPRINGS BRANCH PRESIDENT - AMBER DRIVER

DAY 1

As this is the first year the ICPA Federal Conference has been held on a web based platform, there are many more instructions, directions and technical learnings involved to register, download & join the conference. This web-based conference had me quite nervous as I am not the most tech savvy individual and our internet is not the most reliable thing...

I attended the Pre Conference meeting on Monday 3rd August. It soon became apparent the massive 'behind the scene' workload the Federal Councillors had undertaken to bring this years' Federal Conference to us. They had to ensure there was a suitable way for delegates to vote online (we can just hold up our voting cards at a face to face conference). I got the ICPA app on my mobile and ensured that zoom was available on my computer.

Stress started early on Wednesday morning, Day 1 of the conference, as one of our Branch Delegates (Danyelle Haigh) was unable to secure an internet connection rendering her unable to attend the conference. This meant that we had to find a back up to read and second the Alice Springs Branch Motions, hold the other vote for Day 1 and notify the Federal Council so they were able to document the changes and adjust the votes for our Branch.

While we were in the middle of sorting out what to do, my internet dropped out too – this was just 20min before the Conference Started for Day 1. OMG! It turns out that this was not just an isolated event and there was a Nationwide outage for Skymuster users on their satellite 1A. Many Delegates needed to either look for another way to connect to the conference or find someone to take their place. This caused another wave of behind the scenes workload for our convenors as Delegates, Observers and Votes need to be correctly documented.

So, after a shaky start, I managed to hotspot my mobile phone to the computer (this was an achievement!) and Sarah Cook, our NT ICPA State President confirmed that she would be able to stand in for Danyelle and help me present our Branch Motions. Phew. We were ready for the conference.

The Hutchins School in Hobart had their year 5 & 6 boys "Pride" Choir sing the National Anthem. This is always a great start to our conference and was wonderful to have the choir join us via Zoom.

Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner, AC Governor of Tasmania, opened the Conference and delivered a speech to give us an insight to her role, family and her understanding of ICPA and the support she lends to our motions.

After some more Webinar 'House Keeping' and double checking the Delegates for Day 1, at 11:05am, Sally Sullivan presented the first Motion of the Day... That the 2019 Federal

Conference Motions be accepted... And just like that, the voting icon appeared on our ICPA apps and we were able to cast our vote. Hopefully the rest of the day would continue this smoothly.

Alana Moller was then able to table (and read) her 1st Presidents Report. No-one would have thought that Alana's first Federal Presidents report for the 2020 Conference would be delivered via webinar – Alana has taken this huge change to the conference format in her stride and was able to confidently lead the conference through not only her report, but also the 2 day conference.

Her report was heart-felt, emotional and resonated with all the attendees. Thank you for your support and dedication to ICPA. You're a calm, confident President.

The Federal Council shared a video with all attendees showcasing the Federal Councillors and snippets of their ICPA story. They finished the film by inviting members to join the Federal Council team. I am sure you could find this film on the ICPA facebook page... If you are interested in this opportunity (now or into the future) reach out to them.

Kristen Coggan then delivered her Communications Portfolio Presentation, this lead us into the first round of Agenda Motions for the conference. The Alice Springs Branch has 2 motions in this section.

COMMUNICATIONS

A4. QLD State Council presented the first Agenda Motion of the day in the Communications Section. As there were no speakers against the motion or comments, the motion was put to a vote. Again, so far so good – the voting icon on my ICPA app worked perfectly and I was 2 for 2 with successfully placing a vote. A4 was carried with 100% 'For' the motion.

Motions **A5. A6. & A7.** all followed suit, being supported 100%.

Jules Scarlet was able to talk to the conference attendees and share updates, initiatives and future projects that Telstra are delivering. One of these was a program – 'Regional Advisory Network' that has now has completed its pilot period and is set to roll out to the whole community in the second ¼ of this financial year. I am sure that you will be able to request her report in full via the ICPA Federal Council.

A8. It was now time for the Alice Springs Branch Motions to be tabled. I moved the Motion, and Sarah Cook was on hand to second it and give the explanation. After our motion was read, the conference attendees then had the opportunity to speak for, against or make a comment. One by one, delegates spoke against our motion and raised several concerns, including:

- that we were asking for Federal support on a State based issue in relation to Education.

- that (their) the State were reimbursed for internet use for education and they didn't want

to 'shoot themselves in the foot' and loose this monetary support

- we were being antagonistic by not including the urban counterpart who have children needing to access internet connections to complete homework (and they weren't included in our motion)

- that families would be able to get free internet and would not be able to differentiate between internet use in the school room v's private.

As I tabled the motion, I had to hand over to Sarah Cook to help the attendees further understand our position and intent of the motion. Sarah was able to articulate our unique situation, explaining that many families are left out of pocket to provide an internet connection for their school rooms (this was something that she also touched on in her NT State President Report), the slow pace at which the NT Government were addressing our issue and Sarah was also able to point out that we are asking this help to come from the top – the Federal Government.

As comments about the motion were broadcast to the attendees of the webinar (and my office) it was then my turn to have the right of reply and thus closing debate on the motion. I thanked everyone for their comments regarding our motion and noted them down so as a Branch we could understand members concerns. I said that this highlighted that the NT still has a long way to go to ensure our Territory families had access to internet for their children's education at no cost. This motion was LOST 11/47.

A9. Alice Springs Branch NT. We had speakers in favour of this motion and it carried 50/3.

S2. Namoi Branch NSW. A word change was requested. Carried 51/8.

TELEPHONE

A10. Carried with 100% support.

At 2:20pm (CST) a quick Lunch break was called. By 2:45 I returned to the office with a cuppa and some lunch ready for the afternoon session of the conference. As we were running well behind schedule, all Portfolio Reports and updates have been tabled and will not be read out. These reports will now be made available for all members to access in the coming weeks. For those delegates attending the conference, these reports are available on the ICPA app. Keep an eye out on the ICPA webpage or your Members updates to see how to access these documents. The Early Childhood Motions that were planned for Day 1 will now be moved to Day 2 as the Federal Council work hard to ensure all the motions are tabled.

Tammie Irons presented her QLD State presidents report via a video slideshow.

TERTIARY

A20. was carried 61/1.

S1. WA State Council, there were speakers

against this motion. The concerns included the fee increases (and decreases in some courses) were part of a National review. Other comments included this motion covering a very broad range of people – not specifically geographically isolated, rural & remote students.

Motion S1 was LOST. 27/32

Kate Thompson tabled the Tasmania State Report. It was a sad moment for Kate (and ICPA) to hear her say that on the 22nd July 2020, the TAS ICPA State council held a special meeting and the decision was made to dissolve TAS State Council. Kate remains on Federal Council.

Julia Materne was then awarded a 'Certificate of Appreciation' by the Federal Council to shine a light on her "extraordinary commitment, time and dedication as the ICPA (Australia) archivist." Julia was attending the conference (via Zoom) and was surprised & thrilled to receive this award.

TRAINING

(Portfolio report tabled – not read)

A21. Richmond Branch (QLD) the motion was carried 52/1.

Jill Greenfield then presented her SA ICPA State Council Presidents Report. This was her 1st SA State Presidents Report and she went onto thank past and present councillors for their ongoing support in her role.

To round out Day 1, Alana tabled all the nominations for the Federal Council AGM that will commence on Day 2 and went through the 'plan' for the rest of the conference. We were reminded that there was an evening event 6-7pm "Happy Hour" with Robyn Moore for those delegates who registered. I will have to get the scoop from one of our federal councillors to share with you all as I did not attend that session..

Even though the day threw many technical issues toward Alana and her team, it was nice to see she was still smiling at the end of Day 1!

What an amazing effort – good on you ladies! Suzanne Wilson & Alana Moller, still smiling.

DAY 2

At 6:30am I had a message from our Vice President and Day 2 Delegate, Lisa Kimlin... Her internet (that was also 'out' during the Nation-wide NBN outage on Day1 of conference) had still not come 'back online'. We decided to give it another hour then make a decision on what to do. Thankfully, just before the Conference started, Lisa's internet light went blue and we were back on track.

10am (CST) Lisa and I logged onto the Conference and after the list of Delegates were read out, the 2020 Federal Council Treasurers Report & AGM were the 1st items on the Agenda. Judy Sinclair-Newton chaired the AGM and declared all positions open.

The following members have been appointed for ICPA Federal Council 2020/21: President; Alana Moller. Vice President; Sally Sullivan.

Secretary; Suzanne Wilson. Assistant Secretary; Kate Thompson.

Treasurer; Lisa Slade. Publicity Officer; Jo Camilleri.

Federal Councillors; Jane O'Brien, Kristen Coggan, Nikki Mahony, Kim Hughes, Briony Sinclair, Nikki Macqueen. Immediate Past President; Wendy Hick.

A25. Federal Membership = \$22 per member family for 2021. Carried 71/0.

A26. Corporate Membership = \$275 per organisation for 2021. Carried 62/0.

A27. School (or Educational Institution) Corporate Membership = \$275 for 2021. Carried 64/0.

A33. 2022 Federal Conference be hosted by WA. Carried 61/0.

A28. A29. A30. A31. & A32. All carried with 100% support from the voting delegates.

S3. (Supplementary Motion) regarding the location of the 2021 Federal Conference asking conference permission to be held in Longreach. This Motion was put forward to the conference and then the explanation was presented to attendees as a video. We saw and heard how QLD State Council plan on hosting the 2021 Federal Conference in Longreach, including flights, accommodation, conference venue, etc. During the video, we heard an acoustic version of the song 'True Blue' that had its words changed to reflect the explanation of the motion. QLD State Council have made this video available on their facebook page, what a great, compelling, moving explanation!

The explanation (the video) really hit home, I found myself feeling very emotional as the words softly resonated with me. It is one thing to attend a Federal Conference in a Capital city, stand and read your motion outlining the struggles of educating our children in rural and remote Australia, it is quite another thing to have Ministers, Media and Departmental Staff experience a Federal Conference and the very essence of our motions by walking in our shoes – a rural and remote setting.

Several attendees spoke for and against this motion. As this motion attracted many speakers (I asked to speak For the motion) time was not on our side, so a selection of those For / Against were chosen to put forward their thoughts. We heard concerns raised including the distance to travel, multiple flights, overnights and time away from home, cost of travel and also the importance of having the conference in a place that is accessible to all (capital cities / major centres)

The Federal Council announced that they would abstain from the vote so conference could capture the thoughts of delegates. The motion was put to the vote and carried 53/15.

12pm (CST) we broke for a quick lunch and then Day 2 resumed at 12:30pm (CST)

Kate Everett gave us a presentation on the Dolly's Dream Foundation. This is always an emotional time for many families, this foundation was created out of the most

harrowing event and Kate was gracious to share some of her time with us. I urge you all to seek out information on Dolly's Dream by visiting their website; info@dollysdream.org.au and include your children in the content and conversations that can be found on the website.

We then heard Clair Butler present the NSW State Presidents Report. The Zoom platform was letting us down a bit through this section as her presentation dropped out a few times. Clair went on to thank several State Presidents and also the Federal President for their ability to work collaboratively and cooperatively with NSW State Council on a range of issues.

Now it was time to get through the remaining conference motions. We were reminded to have the ICPA app open and ready to go on our hand held device and refresh the app several times during each voting process. (gosh I am glad I am not behind the scenes with technical issues!!) Each delegate also had the zoom meeting open on their computers. This provided us a back up option for voting is the app was playing up.

SPECIFIC EDUCATION NEEDS

A17. NT State Council. Sarah M. moved the motion and Moira L. seconded it. The motion was carried 67/0.

A18. Hilston Branch, NSW. After the motion was read to the delegates, it was pointed out that the words 'Rural and Remote' were missing from the motion and it may be a big ask to expect the Minister of Health to act on this Motion without the 'rural and remote' words being included. An amendment was suggested to insert the words 'rural and remote'. After these words were added the Chair asked for a mover and seconder for the motion. This meant that a new person was to second the motion. Then, the motion was put back to the floor for discussion. One more comment was put to the floor – that a foreshadowed amendment be suggested; the word 'patients' be replaced with 'students'. This goes to show, that strict conference protocol is followed and a sound knowledge of conference procedure can be gained from our Federal & State Councillors. While we transition from agenda motion to a foreshadowed motion. Wendy Hick then proposed that conference move out of committee to discuss the words of the motion and then reconvene when the words are sorted out. Technical difficulties persisted and we needed to revert to voting via the 'raise hand' icon on the zoom link. The 3rd suggested wording was 'rural and remote children and students'. Wendy then moved to bring us into session to finalise and vote on the motion. Hats off to all the Federal Councillors in the background trying to deal and resolve technical issues and move the conference along. During the whole process Alana was very reassuring, and encouraged attendees to 'bare with us' as they sort through the difficulties and move on with the process while following protocol.

Continued...

2020 ICPA 49TH Annual Federal Conference Continued . . .

In a twist, the original amendment that only included the words 'rural and remote' was carried. So, this motion was put to the vote once more and was carried 69/4.

A19. QLD State Council, carried 62/0.

Andrew Gee MP then addressed the conference from Orange NSW and reflected on his thoughts with rural and remote families and the importance of closing the gaps for country student and kids. I am sure you could request to see the full presentation – get in touch with Federal Council if you are interested in this.

Boarding Portfolio report was tabled (not read) and then we were back to the Agenda Motions.

BOARDING SCHOOLS/SCHOOL HOSTELS/SECOND HOME

A1. Carried 65/0.

A2. I asked council permission to comment, asking if it was NSW State's intent to include 'Territories' in their motion as they only mentioned 'States'. NSW State confirmed that they intended for all to be included in the motion and it was put to the vote. Carried 67/0.

A3. Carried 60/3.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

A11. Carried 65/0

A13. Katherine Branch NT. Was then put to the conference with an addition of words to the start of the motion "That IPCA (Aust) request the Minister of Education..." I was asked to Second the motion on behalf of the Katherine Branch. The motion was carried 75/1.

It was after this motion that I received a phone call (lucky I answered the phone) from a Federal Councillor, there had been a technical issue with the delegates for NT State and I was asked to please help move / second motions for the NT State Council. Thank goodness for a working phone.

A12. NT State Council, moved by Sarah M and Seconded by myself, carried 66/0.

RURAL SCHOOLS/ SCHOOL TRAVEL

A14. Carried 61/0.

A15. NT State Council, There was 1 speaker against this motion and one comment (commenting that it was unlikely this would happen) Our NT State President, Sarah Cook was able to support the motion by explaining the work NT State council had already done in this space – meeting with Qantas and Virgin airlines to gain their thoughts as to how this could be implemented and supported. After more discussion, this motion was carried 49/11.

A16. SA State Council, carried 57/4.

MISCELLANEOUS

A22. NT State Council, carried 48/3.

A23. NT State Council, Moved by Amber Driver on behalf of NT State Council. Sarah M seconded this Motion, then back to me for the explanation. NOTE to self: read and practice what you are going to say BEFORE you say it on a Federal webinar! I got to one of the words in the explanation and my brain was telling me to say it but my mouth had other ideas; tongue tied, I could not get it out: 'Philanthropic'. Awkwardly, and annoyed at myself, I made up a word to take its place and moved on.

Ohh dear! (sorry NT ICPA) This was the closest vote of the day! It sparked much debate and there were a few people who spoke against it.

We heard that some members were concerned it was not ICPA core business, ICPA should not be asked to advocate the ATO for inclusions to the DGR status and ICPA should not be lobbying for NFP Business'. Moira L, NT State Council, spoke to the motion, however the internet gremlins were working their magic at Moira's place and we missed 90% of what she said to support this motion.

The joys of an online webinar paired with poor internet connection. Sarah C, our NT State President and Katy P, Katherine Branch, were on hand to provide further information and offer an example in KICS (Katherine Isolated Children's Services). So after further comments, and support from Sally S, our Federal Vice President (ensuring that this is ICPA business), NT State Council were given the right of reply.

As I moved the motion, this fell to me, so of course, I took the opportunity to try and bring home the motion. This motion talked about geographically isolated (GI) children that are, an 'in need' group and would benefit from the services of KICS. If ICPA Australia can advocate for our GI kids to be classed as 'in need' then that in turn will ensure groups like KICS can access funding linked to the Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status, to continue to deliver their services in rural and remote NT. After I spoke to the motion (right of reply), that finished the debate and the motion was put to the vote. Carried 35/31.

While Federal Council were working through counting votes for this motion, we were shown a video link – A well wish to ICPA and congratulating them on their work for kids in the bush... 10 points and a box of chocolates if you have read the report this far and can identify our celebrity guest and ICPA advocate.

The next Motion was no less exciting; A24. In essence, asking ICPA (Aust) to explore the logistics of offering the Pedals Magazine online. After much debate, the vote was Carried, 39/24.

Floor Motion Conference were asked to give their permission to have the following floor motion added to the agenda:

F1. NSW State Council. "That ICPA Australia urge the Minister for Regional Education to establish an 'Isolated Children's Pandemic Advisory Group' made up of State and Federal Education ministers and relevant authorities, ABSA and ICPA representatives to ensure consistent decisions are made specific to the needs of geographically isolated children who must cross the state borders in order to access education."

The floor motion was discussed at length and it was finally decided that the delegates would support the motion. Carried 46/0.

This was the final motion of the conference 5.06pm, however, we now had many more presentations to get through.

First up was Wendy Hick to give Alana a huge accolade and congratulated her on stepping up to hold the conference on the web-platform and get us all through the 2 days. No small feat.

Wendy went on to thank Jane Morton for her contribution to ICPA and Federal Council over the years with a beautiful slide show presentation and listing some of the achievements Jane has lead for ICPA over the years.

NT Presidents Report – Sarah Cook. 5:16pm (CST) we watched a slide show that walked us through the many things NT ICPA have been doing over the past 12 months. Check out the ICPA NT Facebook page too.

Jane O'Brien, Federal Membership officer, with a presentation for Judy Sinclair Newton. Offering her thanks and 'heartfelt appreciation' for her tireless efforts in convening the 2020 ICPA Web Conference and Federal Conference.

Nikki Macqueen thanked ABSA for letting a number of the ICPA Federal Councillors move into the ABSA office during the course of the Federal Conference. The presented the ABSA colleagues with a very special and unique present... a foot mat.

The WA Presidents report was to follow – another wonderful power-point presentation. I do hope these are all made available somewhere in cyber space, as my FC report notes were getting quite thin by this stage of the conference – it was now nearly 6pm (CST)

What a conference, what a learning curve.

ICPA really is the lifeblood of rural and remote, geographically isolated students and families all across Australia. For a voluntary organisation, ICPA really know how to allow their members to shine. Even though not all motions were carried, I am encouraged to continue on my personal ICPA learning curve and will continue to advocate for equity of education for our rural and remote children regardless of where they dwell.

5.52pm (CST) the 49th Annual Federal Conference was officially closed.

**And in Alana's words
"we survived".**

DOWN THE TRACK COLOURING COMPETITION

After such a great number of entrants to our last colouring competition we have decided to run another one! So get colouring to be in the draw for some great prizes!

There are 5 Categories to enter under:

1. Preschool / Transition
2. Year 1/2
3. Year 3/4
4. Year 5/6
5. Middle School and Up (bored parents?)

Scan or photograph your completed masterpieces and email to Down the Track Editor, Annika Bell at dtc@icpa.com.au

Entry submissions close November 16 and winners will be contacted via email.

Winners will also be announced in the next edition of Down the Track as well as on the ICPA NT Facebook Page.

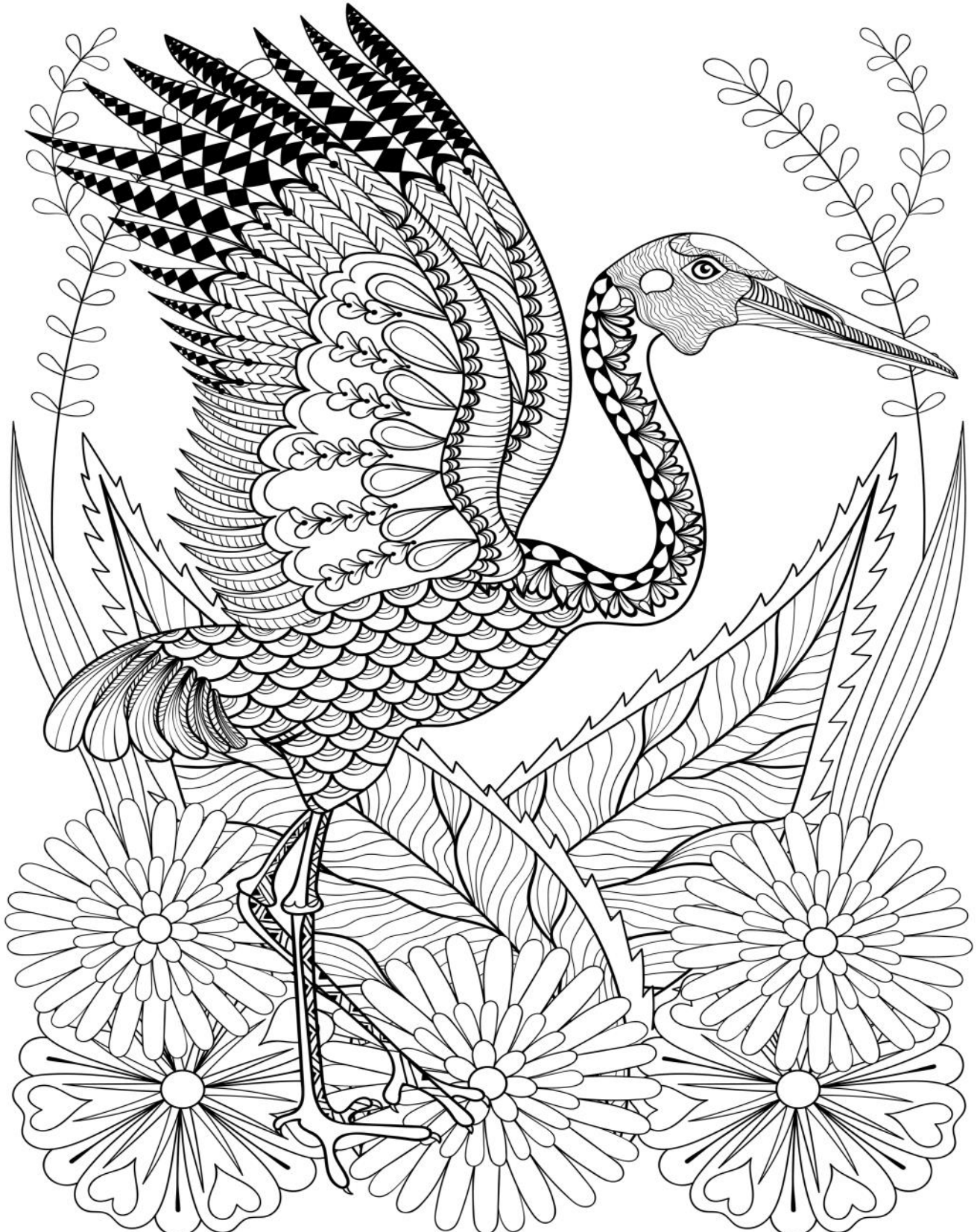
Email the Editor to get a copy of the image for additional students.

STUDENT NAME: _____

AGE CATEGORY: _____

STUDENT LOCATION: _____

CONTACT EMAIL ADDRESS: _____



A BOY AND HIS HORSE - Danyelle Haigh

Due to covid-19, the travel restrictions, and the cancellation of our term 2 in-school week at Alice Springs School of the Air, my son Heath Haigh (6) has been feeling a little down and out not being able to interact or play with many other children.

It can be a lonely time for a distance education kid when our business, Murrarji Water Drilling takes our life on the road to the most remote places in Australia.

When we heard the NT was going ahead with a few of their annual campdrafts it was a sign to pack up, truck the horses out & take a few much needed weeks off & go drafting!



They say a man's best friend is a dog but they haven't seen a boy with his horse. Heath and Bella are the best of friends & their connection shines through their outstanding performance together.

Taking out first place in the minis campdraft & Barrel Race at Harts Range Campdraft, 4th place at Pussy Cat Bore Campdraft in the minis, 4th place at the Daly Waters Campdraft in the minis & 5th place at Yelvertoft Campdraft in the minis. Not to mention multiple places throughout the weeks in the gymkanas.

Doing what we do can be hard on isolated distance education children but to find a happy medium and balance in our life between work and play makes it all worth it when you see your child so content and that smile which lights up his face.



Photos printed with permission from Tash Ellen Photography.

ART ANYWHERE

At the beginning of August my family (extended and immediate) and I packed up and took the long trek out to Garig Gunak Barlu National Park - Cobourg Peninsula. There was lots and lots of fishing, crabbing, shell collecting and generally having a wonderful time exploring.

With 5 children in total there were times however when some 'creative thinking' was required to keep everyone happy / entertained. Out of this need was born 'shell painting' and produced some fun, beautiful shells that the kids now have as gorgeous reminders of our special trip to Cobourg.

ANNIKA BELL



A VISIT TO COODARDIE STATION

Recently ICPA NT's Treasurer Moira Lanzarin had some friends visit her and her family out on Coodardie Station. Here are a couple of accounts from two of her younger visitors, both are students at Table Top Public School NSW, near Albany.

Abigail Sutton - Year 5

We spent 2 weeks at this amazing station and they are the favourite weeks in my whole life.

We arrived on Monday to help with the upcoming Bull Sale. We set up our caravan and went straight to the whiteboard meeting in the shed. There was a long list of jobs to be done, so we all got into our work clothes and dived in head first into the chores.

Our first job was cleaning out some black feed troughs. By this time Anton and Caleb had come out to say hello and we all had a good time, washing and brushing out the troughs with an occasional spray of the hose to keep us on our toes. While we were doing our job the adults were finishing setting up the sale yards.

Later that day we groomed and led the show bulls. These were their names; Starbucks, Amore, Stoick, Honey Bear, Jimmy and John Snow.

My favourite bull was Starbucks, my brother's was Stoick and my sister's was Honey Bear. I was sad to see Starbucks go on sale day but as is life. Starbucks sold for 4000 dollars which was better than most. The day after the sale my family and I went to feed the weaner bulls (next year's sale bulls). When they heard the car coming they ran up to you like puppy dogs with their ears flapping in a galloping rhythm.

The next day we went out to feed the weaner bulls again, but this time with Moira. Once we had emptied out the bag a greedy polka dot bull came up to us and Campbell named that bull Campbell.

The day after that Moira, Mike, Coodardie Dog and I went on a large muster of 250 head. We saw 7 new-born calves and they were the cutest things I have ever seen. We ended up naming a cute chocolatey brown one Shadow.

Moira let me drive the quad-bike for a little bit at the end and wow it was an experience I will not forget. After we put the cows in the yards we preg tested them and vaccinated all 250. My job during this process was to check the scale weight and recording this with Mum on the paperwork.

Then my brother, sister, mum and dad herded the pregnant cows back to their original paddock, leaving behind some of the cows that needed to be watched.



This we started in daylight but it took sometime. I was at the homestead when they were doing this playing board games with Anton and Caleb.

The day after that a cute little heifer entered the world, her name was Camilla. Unfortunately on that day we had to leave one of my favourite places in the whole wide world to continue our adventure.

Dictated by BETHANY SUTTON - Age 6

This is a recount of my time at Coodardie Station.

We arrived there in the afternoon and we got the caravan set up. Then we went and spoke to Moira about all the jobs that needed to be done. I helped to clean out the newly made troughs and tubs for feed for the bulls.



The next morning we got up early ready to work by 7am. Patrick was milking the cows. Sandy was a nice cow and we got to help milk her. The milk went from her teats into a bucket that Patrick was holding with his legs and feet. The milk went to the house and was placed in bottles to then use to drink and make things.

Most days in the morning we needed to get some feed pellets for the weaned bulls and take it out to their paddock to feed to them. A weaner bull is a young male bull that is no longer getting milk from their mother. They will grow into big bulls for sale in 1 to 2 years time.

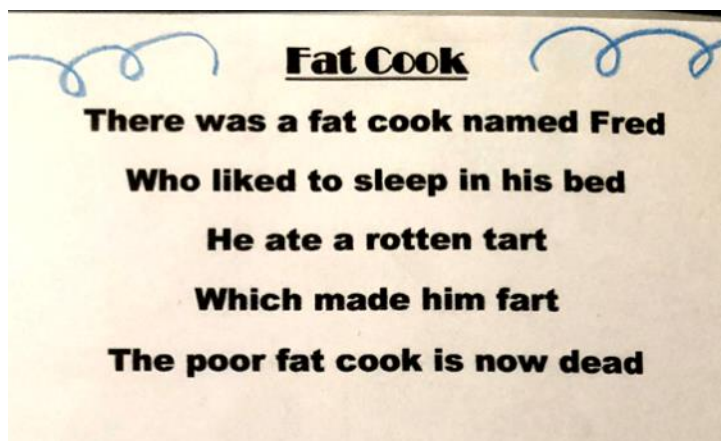
Sale day involved having the bulls in separate pens; some pens had two or three bulls in them. At the bull sale we sat up in the stands and wore special station shirts and watched the auction. This went quickly and some bulls were sold on the day and some sold after the auction.

The day after the auction I helped wash all the plastic feed and water tubs on the grass. I think the children had a few bits of lazy time when the adults packed away the pens.

It was brilliant there. I loved my time with the bulls and with the other children. My favourite game we played when doing quiet activities was stratego. I was sad to have to leave after our time here having fun with other kids.



A LIMMERICK BY JACK ZADDOW



THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR
FANTASTIC WORK JAKE



ISOLATED CHILDREN'S PARENTS ASSOCIATION NORTHERN TERRITORY STATE COUNCIL INCORPORATED



SIBA SHIPS - WELLARD RURAL EXPORTS 'BRIDGING THE GAP' GRANTS PROGRAM

A donation from Siba Ships and the Wellard Rural Export group has allowed NT ICPA to offer the 'Bridging the Gap' Grants program.

WHAT ARE THEY?

These grants shall be awarded in February and August each year to assist in the costs associated for a child to attend an educationally based activity, purchase materials, which are relevant to their current studies or chosen career path or undertake personal development activities.

They are intended to cover course costs, books, equipment, travel and study aids. This is also extended to include activities that relate to student's study course or personal development: leadership skills, information gathering, networking with peers, and course extension activities.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

1. The applicant's family must be geographically isolated and have been a Branch or Lone Member within the NT for at least two years.
2. The applicant must be aged between 15 to 22 years at the 1st January in the year of application.
3. Applicants do not have to be enrolled in fulltime study.

CONDITIONS OF APPLICATIONS

As part of the claim the applicant must provide a 500 word (approx) application which would include:

- How are you or your family isolated
- Details of family membership with the ICPA in the NT
- Details of costs and how the activity or materials that you are applying for will benefit you and what is its relevance to the course you are studying; or your career pathway; or personal development.

Payment will be made in the form of a cheque payable to the successful recipient or guardian, once the application has been deemed successful or alternatively, when a receipt or invoice has been presented to the NT ICPA Treasurer, pertaining to the activity or materials from the educational body.

Retrospective applications can be made for an activity or cost associated that has occurred within the previous semester.

The successful applicants will be required to provide a brief written report outlining the content and achievements obtained, for inclusion in the following NT ICPA 'Down the Track' Newsletter. (photographs encouraged)

A successful applicant may not apply for consecutive bursaries.

SELECTION PROCESS

All applications will be strictly confidential. The names of the applicants will only be known to the current State Council Assistant Secretary, who will not be eligible to sit on the selection panel.

If in the opinion of the selection panel no suitable application is received, grants will not be awarded and the budgeted amount rolled over into the next semester. Amounts awarded each semester will be decided by the panel, ensuring that any single payment is not under \$750 and with the annual amount available to the grants being reviewed and allocated after each AGM.

The decision of the selection panel will be final. Parents of applicants shall not be eligible to sit on the panel.

CLOSING DATES

January 31st July 31st each year.

The application must be received by the Returning Officer by C.O.B. on the closing dates. Please forward the application along with your current address, email and contact phone number to:

NT ICPA Secretary:
Helen Harding
Gorrie Station
RSD MS 1953
Katherine NT 0852
T: 8975 9965
E: hardingnt@bigpond.com

Note: As this mailing address is in a remote location, please allow plenty of time for delivery - email is preferred.

*It is advisable that you ring to ensure that the application has been received.
If sending by email, please ensure you have a 'read receipt' on your outgoing message
and that your email is confirmed as received.*



SAVE THE DATE

ICPANT STATE CONFERENCE

Tuesday 2 March 2021

HOSTED BY THE ALICE SPRINGS BRANCH

H4C

HORSES FOR COURSES
FOR BUSH KIDS
2020

What a wild ride 2020 has been so far for rural and remote families; drought, bushfires and then a good old fashioned pandemic!

Covid19 has seen people around the world forced into social isolation

through physical distancing and although this has been incredibly difficult for many people to endure, it has been an unprecedented look into the lives of families who live in geographic isolation every day.

Social isolation can be a consuming issue for geographically isolated families, adults and children alike. While home-schooling for many urban families was a novelty, something most of them were happy to see the back of, school of the air and distance education continues on, as normal, for families raising and educating their kids in the bush.

Horses for Courses for Bush Kids raises awareness of issues rural and remote families face, through programs and projects directly benefiting Aussie bush kids. Each year the volunteer based organisation puts its heart and soul into organising an outback trail ride through Central Australia's West MacDonnell Ranges for horse enthusiasts right across Australia.


2020 was looking grim with sporting events cancelled and social gatherings banned due to the physical distancing rules. Horse trail riding, by its very nature is a physical distancing sport, but was also included in restrictions. Then, finally there was light at the end of the tunnel, with the Northern Territory lifting restrictions on biosecurity zones and national parks at the beginning of June.

'We're so excited to get the word out there and let people know this year's ride will now go ahead' says Horses for Courses managing director Tiani Cook. 'With so many Central Australian community event's cancelled, including the Alice Springs Show and Masters Games, we're glad we hung out with our decision and now it's all systems go!'

Tiani's hopeful NT border restrictions will also lift by the time the Ride for Bush Kids goes ahead in October. 'We're still a few months out so hopefully interstate horse riders will have the opportunity to travel to our beautiful backyard in Central Australia for the ride. The 2020 Horses for Courses Ride for Bush Kids will give everyone something to look forward to.'

The Horses for Courses trail ride will take place through the Magnificent West MacDonnell Ranges, 4-9 October 2020.

Information, and registration details are available on the website www.horsesforcourses.net.au




HORSES FOR COURSES
for Bush Kids
www.horsesforcourses.net.au

NORTHERN TERRITORY
West MacDonnell National Park
4 – 9 October 2020

2020 Horses for Courses Annual Ride for Bush Kids is going ahead in October this year and we're extending the invite to families of ICPA & Schools of the Air across Australia, to join free.

H4C Ride for Bush Kids takes place through the West MacDonnell Ranges in Central Australia's Red Centre over five fabulous nights. Camp under the stars, make new friends and recharge your batteries in a land as old as time.

An Amazing Adventure You'll Never Forget!



To register and learn more: www.horsesforcourses.net.au



2019 Horse for Courses Riders



Letitia - one of Horse for Courses avid riders



Isolated Children's Parents' Association

NORTHERN TERRITORY MEMBERSHIP FORM FOR 2020

DUE JANUARY 1ST EACH YEAR.



MEMBERSHIP TO YOUR LOCAL BRANCH IS ONLY \$50/FAMILY/YEAR

- Entitles you to branch meeting voting, minutes and branch bursaries qualification.
- State and Federal conference voting rights and attendance (paid for by your branch or the lone members).
- Free access to the ICPA NT run Home Tutor Register.
- Qualification for the NT ICPA State Council Bursaries.
- Free subscription to Publications- NTICPA 'Down the Track' and Federal ICPA 'Pedals' magazines.
- A voice in your children's education.

If you're not receiving these publications regularly, check with your treasurer- you may not be a financial member for 2020.

If you still want to keep in touch, but not be associated with a particular branch, then **Lone Members** is for you!

Please fill in this form and forward with a cheque, to one of the below treasurers.

Make it payable to the "**Branch** (e.g. Alice Springs) **ICPA**" or "**NT ICPA**" for Lone Members.

If paying by Direct Deposit method, please use your first initial and surname with the word 'Membership' as the reference to help the treasurer. (e.g. 'J Bloggs Membership') and fax, post or email your family details.

These are important to use for bursary qualifications and for ICPA lobbying purposes.

ALICE SPRINGS

Treasurer: Katherine Warby

Philip Creek Station
CMB 10
Tennant Creek NT 0862
Ph: (08) 89 644 710
philipcreek@hotmail.com

Westpac
BSB: 035 303
Acct#: 510446

KATHERINE

Treasurer: Fiona McDonald

PMB 38
Katherine NT 0852
M: 0408 520 452
E: calfe@bigpond.net.au

ANZ
BSB: 015 884
Acct#: 410 247 444

LONE MEMBERS

Treasurer: Sarah Measey

Ceres Downs
PMB 271
Winnellie NT 0822
Ph: 08 89782155
E: ntlonemembers@icpa.com.au

ANZ
BSB: 015 884
Acct#: 264 118 512

BRANCH:		
TITLE:	FIRST NAME :	SURNAME:
ADDRESS:		
PH:	FAX:	EMAIL:

Please advise your Branch Secretary and Treasurer of your change of postal or email address

Your children's details

(this information is retained by the Branch and State Council Treasurers and Secretaries and used for Bursary qualifications and lobbying purposes)

Names (of Children)	Age (turning in 2020)	Year Level (in 2020)	School/University/College Attending

I give ICPA permission to use photographs of my children for use in ICPA Publications and Newsletters, including the NTICPA Facebook Page ☐ Please ✓

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Liz Bird

LONE MEMBERS

LONE MEMBER OFFICER

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PMB 271
Winnellie NT 0822
08 8978 2155
ntlone members@icpa.com.au

ICPA NT LONE MEMBERS

This is a group who wish to be informed
of ICPA issues, but do not wish to
belong to a 'branch' as such.
Anyone who lives anywhere can be an NT Lone
Member.

The Lone members do not hold meetings,
but they do hold two votes at conferences
(State & Federal).

If you would like to receive regular
publications from state council
'Down the Track' and Federal Council
'Pedals' then Lone Members is for you!



BARKLY BRANCH LIFE MEMBERS

Wendy Ohlsen
Carmel Wagstaff
Robyn Peatling

KATHERINE BRANCH

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Jackie Harvey
Merrial Lawrie
Martha Swart
Patricia Elliot
Royelene Hill
Janelle and Blue Pugh

#85
SEPT
2020

DOWN THE TRACK N E W S L E T T E R

