

Tuesday 16 July 2019

NAIDOC WEEK CELEBRATIONS BRING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER

The 2019 NAIDOC Week festivities have been a great success in Narrandera with the community coming together to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The 2019 theme was Voice Treaty Truth, Lets Work Together for a Shared Future.

The week began with a Welcome Baby to Country Ceremony hosted by the Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Service (AMIHS) and Building Strong Foundations Program (BSF) Aboriginal Health team. Children were welcomed by the Elders and gifted a certificate to commemorate the ceremony together with a possum skin.

Celebrations continued on Friday with a full day of activities including a march along East & Twynam Streets and then on to Marie Bashir Park. The Welcome to Country by local elder Aunty Jennifer began the ceremony, and was followed by Lateisha Bright who gave a wonderful Wiradjuri Welcome to the community followed by a didgeridoo and clap sticks performance by Adam Irons and Xavier Beauchamp.

Braden Lyons gave a powerful voice to the day describing what it represents, "We are here today to celebrate NAIDOC Week, but also to celebrate our beautiful culture, our mob, our family. That is what we are as First Nation People, we are all family and one mob."

The band River Country was on hand to sound out some great tunes as the festivities continued with face painting and dancing. Community members braved the cold and windy conditions to participate in games run by Fusion, which included life-size versions of snakes and ladders, and Connect Four as well as Jaffa smash and stilt walking.

Children competed in orange relays, the longest kick competition and boomerang catching. The games were rounded out by two games of league tag for the Under 10s and Under 13s and the day concluded with the Clontarf Academy taking on the Community Team in league tag for the inaugural NAIDOC Community Cup. After 15 minutes of play the teams could not be separated, ending the game in a 5 – 5 draw.

Mayor Cr Neville Kschenka said of the celebrations, "These events are a great opportunity to bring our community together and I believe we have achieved a very positive result, with everyone in attendance enjoying the activities, the comradery and the sentiment that NAIDOC represents.

"I would like to congratulate the organisers for two extremely well organised events, and I look forwards to what next year brings," Mayor Kschenka continued.

Event contributor Bidgee Boxing President, Neville Bamblett, was thrilled with the event, "I couldn't have been happier than I was on Friday at the NAIDOC celebrations. It was a good turn out with great music by River Country and it was great to see Fusion come down and put on some games for the kids.

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“I feel there is a change happening in Australia and I think we should all be a part of it. I would love for next year’s event to be bigger and better with even more community support and involvement. Happy NAIDOC my people.”

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the great success of NAIDOC Week 2019, including several local Aboriginal and community groups, Boori Dreaming Women’s Group, Bidgee Boxing, Clontarf Academy, Gundyarri Aboriginal Corporation, Local Aboriginal Lands Council, Narrandera Lizards Junior Rugby League, Fusion and Kito’s Coffee Van.



Naïdoc Week march along East Street.

END

Precis or Summary: NAIDOC Week Celebrations Bring The Community Together			
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